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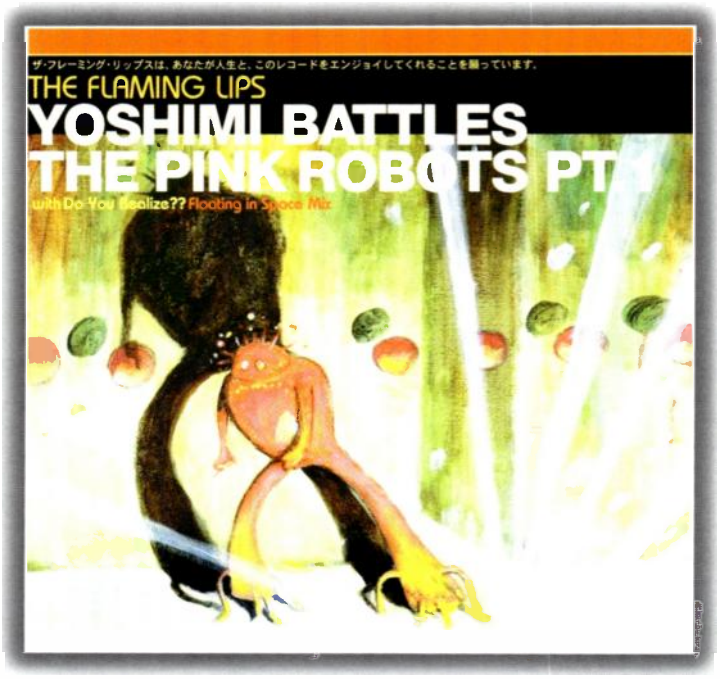

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IS THIS THE FUTURE?

WHAT THE SHELVES OF YOUR LOCAL RECORD SHOP COULD LOOK LIKE IF GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR CENSORSHIP OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY GO AHEAD. NME INVESTIGATES IN A SPECIAL THREE-PAGE REPORT

The government came a step closer to setting themselves up as censors of the music you can listen to this week, after Home Secretary David Blunkett said he wanted a hand in deciding "what is and isn't acceptable" subject matter for artists to record songs about.

The Home Secretary is using the current furore surrounding gun crime (which soared by 35 per cent in Britain last year) and the perceived glamorisation of guns within music, in particular hip-hop and garage, to push through his plans.

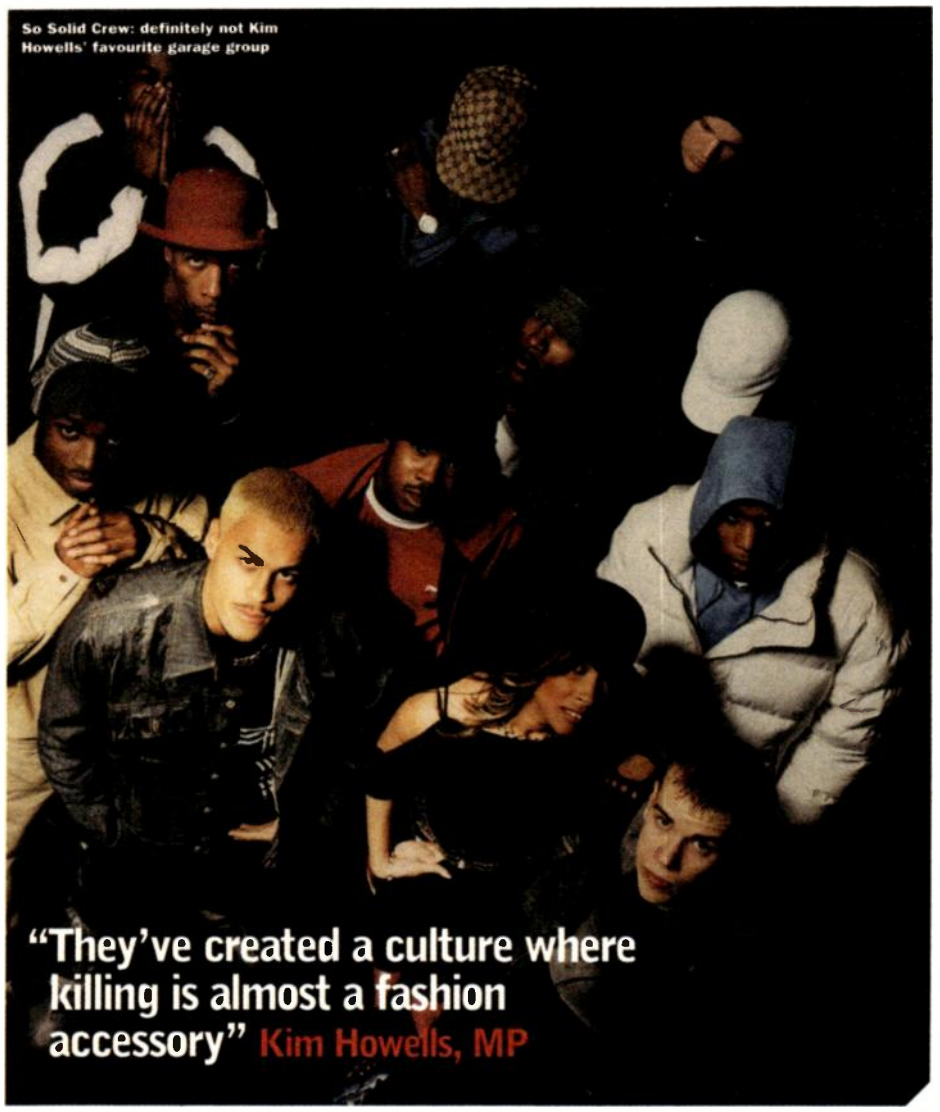
A Home Office meeting was due to take place as *NME* went to press (January 10) to decide on a way forward.

Those present at the meeting were to include police, customs officials, Crown Prosecution Service officials and community leaders.

A spokesperson for the Home Office said the meeting would discuss the wider gun issue, but would also "decide on whether or not to have further meetings with the music industry".

On pages 4 and 5 *NME* investigates what a potential law covering music and censorship would mean. We also look at how the US and Australia have taken differing stances on this prickly issue.

Government hits out at 'appalling' rap music



So Solid Crew: definitely not Kim Howells' favourite garage group

HOME SECRETARY WANTS TO TALK TO RECORD LABELS ABOUT WHAT'S "ACCEPTABLE"

Home Secretary **David Blunkett** last week blamed rap for creating a gun culture in Britain.

His comments came in the wake of the murders of Letisha Shakespeare and Charlene Ellis – gunned down when they were caught in the crossfire of rival gangs at a New Year's Eve party in Birmingham. Blunkett was one of a host of politicians who rushed to point the finger at hip-hop and express a desire to censor it.

Priming Blunkett's remarks were those of Minister For Tourism, Film and Broadcasting in the department of Culture, Media and Sport, **Dr Kim Howells**. Howells, MP for Pontypridd, slammed "hateful lyrics that these boasting, macho idiot rappers come out with". Howells did not provide any specific examples, but reserved his most vitriolic attack for south London's **So Solid Crew** who he believed were "idiots". He claimed they "created a culture where killing is almost a fashion accessory".

NME asked the minister, whose portfolio includes the "creative industries" exactly why he thought this. We also asked if he would provide some examples of "hateful lyrics" and wanted to ask if he agreed with his Home Secretary that the government should have a say in the content of lyrics. The MP considered the questions and an interview request overnight before refusing to comment.

NME has been inundated with letters, many condemning the minister, but some also supporting his claims. Turn to *NMEMail* on page 42 to read a selection.

Blunkett dived into the debate early last week (January 6). Speaking on **Jeremy Vine**'s show on BBC Radio 2, the Home Secretary condemned "appalling" rap music. He said there was a link between gun violence, Class A drugs and music.

"I am concerned that we need to talk to the record producers, to the distributors, to those who are actually engaged in the music business about what is and isn't acceptable," he said.

GANGLAND BRITAIN
BROTHERS AT ARMS
Shot twins were in family at war

Time Blunkett stopped talking rap about guns

GANGSTA RAP GETS BLAME FOR GUN MADNESS
Blunkett fury at song lyrics

"We need to talk to the producers and distributors about what is and isn't acceptable"
David Blunkett, Home Secretary

His remarks came after he was played an extract of 'U Don't Know' by **Jay-Z**. The track contains the lines *"Ya'll nervous knowin' them guns on full service ready to fire/One body, two body, three body, four/Young sittin' on paper, I'm above the law"*. It was not pointed out that the track was lifted from Jay-Z's 'The Blueprint 2: The Gift & The Curse' which peaked in the UK charts at 56 and dropped out of the Top 100 within a fortnight. While Jay-Z's albums sell by the millions in the US, such a showing would be seem unlikely to influence a cultural shift in Britain.

One voice of reason did emerge from Parliament last week. **Diane Abbott**, MP for Hackney North, a constituency which has seen an increase in gun crime, disagreed with David Blunkett's proposal.

"Let's not pretend that ending gun criminality on the streets of Hackney or Birmingham is as simple as getting people to sing different songs," she said.

Her thoughts were echoed by the Mayor of London, **Ken Livingstone**.

"I think we need to avoid criminalising an entire form of youth culture while confronting the problem of violence," he told *NME*.

Even Blunkett's second at the Home Office **John Denham**, the minister in charge of police and crime, said he was "not entirely convinced" that politicians should dictate popular culture.

"I very much doubt that banning music would be likely to get us the ear of those very young people that we are trying to influence," he said.

However, Blunkett does not seem able to stop himself making knee-jerk reactions. In the immediate aftermath of the Birmingham murders, he announced government plans to impose a mandatory five-year prison term for gun possession. He claimed the plans had been in the pipeline for some time but then fudged the issue, saying there would be some flexibility in the law's application and that it would not be mandatory.

At present his plans for the record industry are unclear.

WHAT BLUNKETT MIGHT INTRODUCE

A variation on the US' 'parental advisory' stickers, tailored specifically for the UK market

Restriction on sales of certain albums to certain age-groups following the Australian lead

A classification system, modelled on film certificate ratings system which would work in tandem with sales restrictions

Artists using bad language or making references to violence in their tracks could be instructed to deliver 'clean' or 'radio edit'-style releases for the younger market

A ban on TV advertising of certain albums before the 9pm watershed

A law outlawing the release of any records that aren't "acceptable"

Ms Dynamite: government gun claims are 'bullshit'

In the wake of the government comments on rap and UK garage blaming them for glamorising gun culture, figures within the industry have hit back.

Ms Dynamite, a long-time friend and ally of **So Solid Crew**, was the first and most forthright to speak, telling *The Guardian* that it was "bullshit" to claim that garage music was inextricably linked to violence.

"Garage is a young London scene," she said. "That's why people in power are afraid of us and try everything to shut us down. There is violence wherever you go and the rave is a small part of it. It is a metaphor for life in general."

Radio 1's **Trevor Nelson** joined the debate, saying: "If there is a serial killer on the loose, they don't ring Stephen King and start telling him about what he puts in his movies or books because we all enjoy them. We go to the cinema, we know it is not real, we go home. But as soon as this happens with this subject... they are knocking on every musician's door – from Eminem to whoever."

However, So Solid Crew have pointedly refused to comment. Despite being the artists at the centre of much of the debate, the collective refused *NME*'s offer to put their side of the argument.

Ms Dynamite: "There is violence wherever you go"

PHOTOGRAPHY: PEROUINC.COM/BERND OTT

The American way: self-regulation

Despite intense lobbying, the **United States** has never introduced an 'age-rating' system for music – although since 1985 it has been home to the 'Parental Advisory' warning on many rap and metal albums.

The Recording Industry Association Of America (RIAA), the group that represents the country's record companies, has continually refused to bow to pressure to outlaw albums – instead looking at ways to promote their current system more effectively.

They are the group responsible for the implementation of 'Parental Advisory' labels on albums and singles, and their related adverts.

"Our label is an advisory logo about explicit lyrics," RIAA President Hilary Rosen said recently. "It makes no judgements – nor do we think such judgements are warranted or possible – about what is appropriate for any specific age group.

"This debate over music keeps coming back to the same thing. Despite all of the trappings and new ways to look at the issue, the fact is that some people just don't like the music. And that is a freedom of expression issue. No-one likes every record in the marketplace, but we shouldn't go down the path of suggesting that popular culture is popular against the wishes and values of its fans. Rather it is popular precisely because everyday people buy it or enjoy it.

"I am more afraid of what attacks on culture do to teenagers who already feel alienated. Taking away angry music will not take away angry feelings. I am sympathetic with parents who feel that the world has gotten just a little too harsh and complicated. We all must recognise that the music industry can give them tools to help make their job a little easier, but we cannot accept the responsibility of parenting."

"Taking away angry music will not take away angry feelings"
RIAA President Hilary Rosen

Australia takes hardline approach

UK governmental control over recorded output is not as fantastical as it appears. **Australia** is set to introduce draconian new laws where certain music is banned from sale to under-18s.

The Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA) and the Australian Music Retailers Association (AMRA) are revising the criteria for classification of CDs after talks with the government.

Under current legislation, CDs containing strong language or themes such as violence, drug use, murder and suicide are rated as Level One (moderate impact) or Level Two (strong impact) and labelled with a warning advisory sticker. However, ARIA is advocating a new Level Three which would see certain CDs restricted from sale to under-18s.

Eminem would be barred under the proposals and rather surprisingly artists such as Oasis and Jennifer Lopez could also be withheld from sale.

"We are talking about material that is quite extreme," chief executive officer of ARIA, Stephen Peach told the BBC in November.

AMRA executive officer Ian Harvey added: "The revised code provides clear, understandable advice plus the new Level Three classification will protect minors from gaining access to what is adult material."

The amended code will be brought in from March by ARIA and AMRA.

"The new Level Three classification will protect minors from gaining access to what is adult material" **AMRA spokesperson Ian Harvey**

The Editor speaks

Let me take you to a possible future in Britain. There's a band you've heard about, a hot act over in America. They come from a tough neighbourhood of a major city and they've exploded across the US charts spitting venomous lyrics about their dark experiences of urban desperation, poverty and violence. You're dying to get hold of the album but there's a problem – the lyrics contain references to guns that have been declared unacceptable under new regulations agreed by the government and the record industry. Because of this no UK label will release the music, the major chains won't stock the album on import and no UK-based TV channel will show the video. Government pressure can be considerable, but the real enforcing power behind these regulations is the fear of trial by tabloid for organisations labelled as supporting gun crime.

This possible future cannot be allowed to happen.

Clearly no-one wants guns on the streets of Britain. A staggering 22 firearms offences are committed on average every day in Britain and gun crime and the fear of gun crime threatens to blight a generation in some communities. Getting guns off the streets should be a priority, but censoring hip-hop is not part of the solution. A story that started with the tragic shooting of two young women in Birmingham has swiftly spun into a government-led attack on musicians.

The government has no place deciding the content of the music you choose to listen to. If New Labour don't like what a band is saying then tough, that's freedom of speech, no matter how unpleasant the content might sometimes be. If you start by banning mentions of guns where do you stop? The Class A drug references in the songs of The Libertines? The themes of suicide from Marilyn Manson?

Not only is it unacceptable for the government to tell music fans what should and should not be in their CD collections, it's also entirely unworkable.

In our possible future you wouldn't have any trouble getting hold of tracks from the new American band, would you? A quick web search shows a dozen sites have sprung up for them already. UK sites have MP3s to download for people who can't get hold of the US CD. You've burned a CD for yourself in minutes. Next day you hear someone with their own illegal CD of the band showing it to his mate: "Hey, you should listen to this. It's got loads of stuff about guns on it and it's been banned! How cool is *that*?"

Conor McNicholas

UK TOP 40 SINGLES

THE OFFICIAL UKSINGLES CHART

1	1	**SOUND OF THE UNDERGROUND**	GIRLS ALOUD (POLYDOR)
2	2	**CHEEKY SONG (TOUCH MY BUM)**	CHEEKY GIRLS (MULTIPLY)
3	3	**LOSE YOURSELF**	EMINEM (INTERSCOPE)
6	4	**IF YOU'RE NOT THE ONE**	DANIEL BEDINGFIELD (POLYDOR)
7	8	**YOU'RE A SUPERSTAR**	LOVE INC (NULIFE)
4	6	**SACRED TRUST/AFTER YOU'RE GONE**	ONE TRUE VOICE (EBUL/JIVE)
5	7	**SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD**	BLUE FT ELTON JOHN (INNOCENT)
–	8	**DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE**	ELECTRIC SIX (XL RECORDINGS)
8	9	**SK8ER BOI**	AVRIL LAVIGNE (ARISTA)
–	10	**THE WAY (PUT YOUR HAND IN MY HAND)**	DIVINE INSPIRATION (DATA/MOS)
9	11	**THE KETCHUP SONG (ASEREJE)**	LAS KETCHUP (COLUMBIA)
10	12	**DILEMMA**	NELLY FT KELLY ROWLAND (UNIVERSAL)
13	13	**FEEL**	ROBBIE WILLIAMS (CHRYSALIS)
28	14	**REACT**	ERICK SERMON FT REDMAN (J)
–	15	**SOLSBURY HILL**	ERASURE (MUTE)
12	16	**FAMILY PORTRAIT**	PINK (ARISTA)
14	17	**LAST GOODBYE/BE WITH YOU**	ATOMIC KITTEN (INNOCENT)
–	18	**TIRED LIKE THESE**	FOO FIGHTERS (RCA)
16	19	**HOLDING ON FOR YOU**	LIBERTY X (V2)
15	20	**WE'VE GOT TONIGHT**	RONAN KEATING FT LULU (POLYDOR)
33	21	**LAND OF THE LIVING**	MILK INC (POSITIVA)
–	22	**SCIENCE OF SILENCE**	RICHARD ASHCROFT (HUT)
–	23	**I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY**	FLIP & FILL (ALL AROUND THE WORLD)
17	24	**WHAT MY HEART WANTS TO SAY**	GARETH GATES (S)
–	25	**BORN AGAIN**	BADLY DRAWN BOY (XL RECORDINGS)
18	26	**JENNY FROM THE BLOCK**	JENNIFER LOPEZ (EPIC)
–	27	**WE DON'T CARE**	AUDIO BULLYS (SOURCE)
20	28	**NAUGHTY GIRL**	HOLLY VALANCE (LONDON)
11	29	**PUPPY LOVE/SLEIGH RIDE**	S CLUB JUNIORS (POLYDOR)
19	30	**THING LOVIN'**	JA RULE FT BOBBY BROWN (DEF JAM)
39	31	**DANCER**	CH & SUPREME DREAM TEAM (MULTIPLY)
21	32	**HEAVEN**	DJ SAMMY AND YANOU FT DO (DATA/MOS)
24	33	**NU FLOW**	BIG BROVAZ (EPIC)
23	34	**SCORPIO RISING**	DEATH IN VEGAS/LIAM GALLAGHER (CONCRETE)
22	35	**UNITED STATES OF WHATEVER**	LIAM LYNCH (GLOBAL WARMING)
30	36	**LIKE I LOVE YOU**	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE (JIVE)
49	37	**AM I ON YOUR MIND**	OXYGEN FT ANDREA BRITTON (INNOCENT)
27	38	**STRONGER/ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES**	SUGABABES (ISLAND)
32	39	**ONE ANOTHER DAY**	MADONNA (WARNER BROS)
31	40	**DON'T LET ME DOWN/YOU AND I**	WILL YOUNG (S)

UK TOP 40 ALBUMS

THE OFFICIAL UKALBUMS CHART

1	1	**LET GO**	AVRIL LAVIGNE (ARISTA)
3	2	**MISSUNDAZTOOD**	PINK (ARISTA)
2	3	**ESCAPOLOGY**	ROBBIE WILLIAMS (EMI)
4	4	**ONE LOVE**	BLUE (INNOCENT)
5	5	**BY THE WAY**	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS (WARNER BROS)
6	6	**A RUSH OF BLOOD TO THE HEAD**	COLDPLAY (PARLOPHONE)
7	7	**UNBREAKABLE – THE GREATEST HITS – VOL 1**	WESTLIFE (S)
9	8	**A NEW DAY AT MIDNIGHT**	DAVID GRAY (EAST WEST)
11	9	**ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES**	SUGABABES (ISLAND)
16	10	**GOTTA GET THRU THIS**	DANIEL BEDINGFIELD (POLYDOR)
33	11	**IT HAD TO BE YOU – THE GREAT AMERICAN**	ROD STEWART (J)
8	12	**THE GREATEST HITS 1970-2002**	ELTON JOHN (MERCURY)
14	13	**ESCAPE**	ENRIQUE IGLESIAS (INTERSCOPE)
21	14	**COME AWAY WITH ME**	NORAH JONES (PARLOPHONE)
10	15	**WHITE LADDER**	DAVID GRAY (EAST WEST)
37	16	**JUSTIFIED**	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE (JIVE)
15	17	**ELVIS – 30 NUMBER 1 HITS**	ELVIS PRESLEY (RCA)
39	18	**MORE FRIENDS – SMALL WORLD BIG BAND 2**	JOOLS HOLLAND (WSM)
12	19	**FEELS SO GOOD**	ATOMIC KITTEN (INNOCENT)
18	20	**THE EMINEM SHOW**	EMINEM (INTERSCOPE)
24	21	**ONE BY ONE**	FOO FIGHTERS (RCA)
13	22	**THIS IS ME THEN**	JENNIFER LOPEZ (EPIC)
23	23	**THINKING IT OVER**	LIBERTY X (V2)
22	24	**FORTY LICKS**	ROLLING STONES (VIRGIN DECCA)
42	25	**A LITTLE DEEPER**	MS DYNAMITE (POLYDOR)
20	26	**NIRVANA**	NIRVANA (GEFFEN)
17	27	**ALL RISE**	BLUE (INNOCENT)
19	28	**DIVE IN**	DARIUS (MERCURY)
35	29	**STRIPPED**	CHRISTINA AGUILERA (RCA)
25	30	**FROM NOW ON**	WILL YOUNG (S)
29	31	**THE BEST OF 1990-2000 & B-SIDES**	U2 (ISLAND)
26	32	**NELLYVILLE**	NELLY (UNIVERSAL)
45	33	**SLICKER THAN YOUR AVERAGE**	CRAIG DAVID (WILDSTAR)
–	34	**BUSTED**	BUSTED (UNIVERSAL)
32	35	**DESTINATION**	RONAN KEATING (POLYDOR)
28	36	**FOREVER DELAYED – THE GREATEST HITS**	MANIC STREET PREACHERS (EPIC)
36	37	**UP**	SHANIA TWAIN (MERCURY)
30	38	**WHAT MY HEART WANTS TO SAY**	GARETH GATES (S)
40	39	**BEST OF BOWIE**	DAVID BOWIE (EMI)
41	40	**LAUNDRY SERVICE**	SHAKIRA (EPIC)

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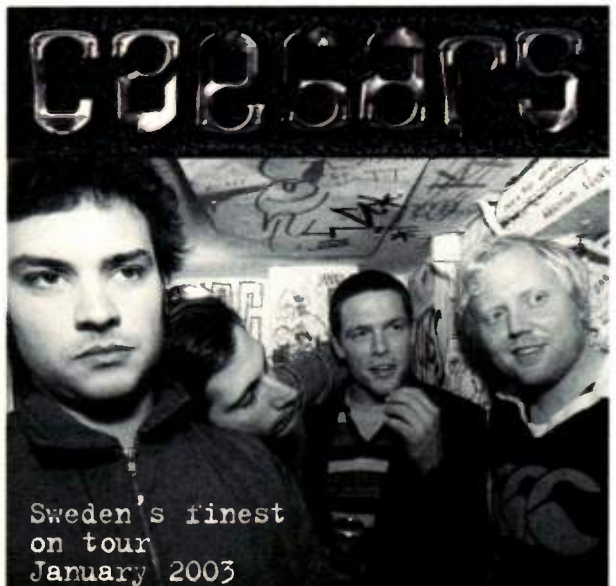

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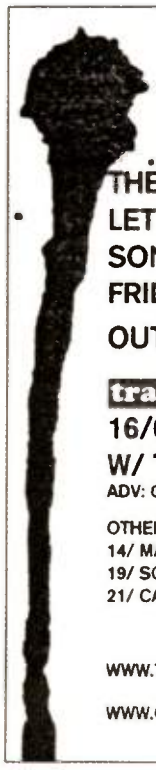

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Cops raid US rap labels

THA ROW AND MURDER INC OFFICES VISITED BY POLICE – SUGE KNIGHT AND 50 CENT SPEND CHRISTMAS BEHIND BARS

While debate rages in the UK over the links between hip-hop and crime, in the US the industry has been shaken by the re-arrest of Tha Row boss **Suge Knight**. Meanwhile, in New York, the offices of Murder Inc Records have been raided and Eminem protegé **50 Cent** has been arrested on alleged guns charges.

On January 3, the offices of Murder Inc, home to artists including **Ja Rule** and **Ashanti**, were raided by police. According to a report in the *Los Angeles Times*, police are looking into allegations of links between the label and Kenneth McGriff, the convicted head of New York drug gang the Supreme Team.

As *NME* went to press, no arrests had been made as a direct result of the raid.

The raid rounded off a tumultuous period in American rap, with high profile figures Marion 'Suge' Knight and 50 Cent spending time behind bars over the festive period.

Knight was released on parole in August 2001 after serving five years for violating probation on assault charges by getting into a fight in a Las Vegas hotel.

The owner of Tha Row Records (formerly Death Row) was arrested on December 23 following the alleged discovery by Los Angeles police of possible violations. These are said to involve association with reputed gang members, according to police.

Knight has protested his innocence from behind bars, denying any involvement in the LA gang scene – except when his music dealings require it.

"I ain't no gangster. I'm too damn old. I'm a grown man trying to run a business," he said. "The guys who work for me ain't out wearing rags and gangbanging in the streets. We got families. We got bills. Why don't they just leave us alone?

"I told parole that if I had to stop dealing with people from the 'hood, I might as well shut down my business. I can't just turn my back on the people I came up with. Rap comes from the same place that I did – the ghetto."

Knight claims that the police want information on a string of gang killings over the last year, something he knows nothing about.

He added: "My parole officer asked me to stop by before the holidays but, as I opened the door to his office, this gang investigator was standing there who tells me they plan to put me away for a real long time if I don't start talking. I told him, 'You better handcuff me right now. Because I don't know a thing about it.'"

Suge Knight and (left) 50 Cent both spent time in prison over Christmas

Sheriff's investigators raided Knight's Malibu home and the Beverly Hills office of Tha Row Records on November 14 in connection with a pair of unsolved homicides. Knight is not a suspect in the killings.

Back in New York, upcoming rapper and Shady Records artist 50 Cent is out on bail after being charged with criminal possession of a weapon after an alleged incident on December 31.

The rapper, real name **Curtis Jackson**, was one of five men arrested after undercover police searched a hired vehicle in which they were travelling to an appearance at the Copacabana nightclub in Manhattan. Police claim to have found two weapons, a .25-caliber handgun and a .45-caliber gun.

After initial investigations, four of the five men were charged, with 50 Cent making a brief appearance in court (January 3), where he posted $10,000 bail. He is scheduled to make his next court appearance in relation to the incident on March 25. He is yet to make a formal plea.

"I told parole that if I had to stop dealing with people from the 'hood, I might as well shut down my business" Suge Knight

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oasis have confirmed final details of their new single, 'Songbird'. Released on February 3, the first Oasis single to be penned by **Liam Gallagher** features a new **Noel Gallagher** song, '(You've Got) The Heart Of A Star', and 'Columbia', recorded live at the Glasgow Barrowlands in October 2001.

A DVD single will also be released, featuring the video for the single and a demo of the song.

Oasis: ready to release their 'Songbird'

Green Day frontman **Billie Joe Armstrong** has been arrested for driving under the influence in California (January 5).

Armstrong was pulled over in his black BMW convertible at 1am, after allegedly being clocked speeding. He was given sobriety and breathalyser tests and taken to a nearby police station in Berkeley, where he was charged with alleged misdemeanour drunk-driving, and later released on $1,200 bail.

Run-DMC are to release a Greatest Hits album in March. The compilation will feature around 20 tracks including all their big hits – 'It's Like That', 'My Adidas', 'Walk This Way' and 'It's Tricky' – as well as two brand new remixes.

Marilyn Manson will release his new album 'The Golden Age Of Grotesque' in April. The record, the follow-up to 'Holy Wood (in The Shadow Of The Valley Of Death)', will be accompanied by live shows later in the year.

An exhibition celebrating the life's work of **The Buff Medways' Billy Childish** has opened in London. '25 Years Of Being Childish' shows many of the books and fanzines produced by Billy over the last quarter-century and is being held at the London Print Studio, 425 Harrow Road, W10 and The Window Gallery, Central St Martins, 107-109 Charing Cross Road, WC2 until March 1.

Radio 1 is introducing a special 'unsigned' playlist alongside its usual A, B and C playlists this week, as part of OneMusic Unsigned Week, which runs until Friday (January 17).

Six unsigned acts will receive airplay throughout the day on the station. The Unsigned playlist will run again later in the year.

PHOTOGRAPHY: RETNA/LFI

THE LIBERTINES

ROUGH TRADE

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OUT 13TH JAN

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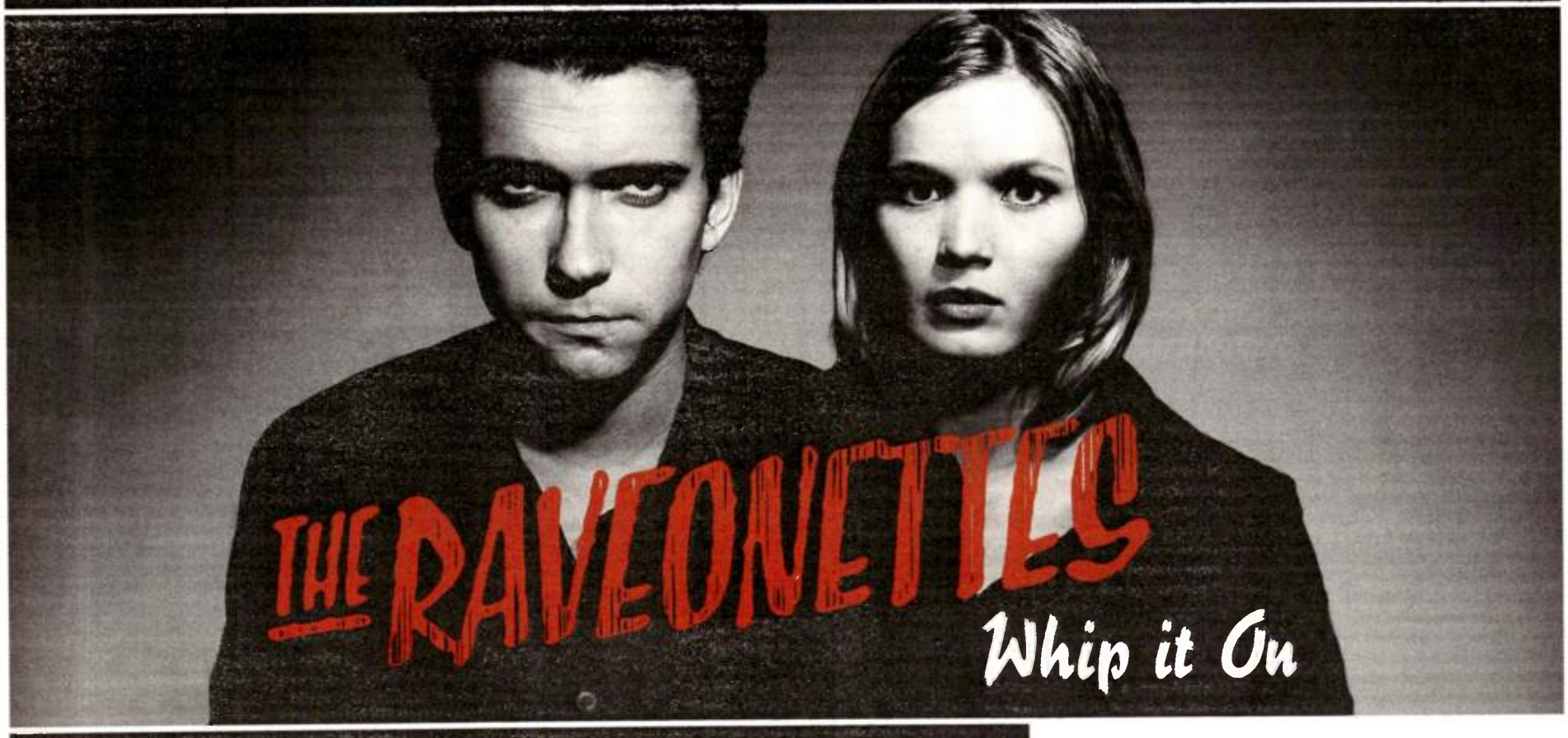

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Lamacq's replacement a hit with listeners

DJ COLIN MURRAY FILLS RADIO 1 EVENING SESSION SLOT WITH WIDER-RANGING NEW MUSIC PLAYLIST

Colin Murray made his Radio 1 debut last week hosting the main weekday evening slot – the most high-profile radio programme for new music in the UK – and got an overwhelming vote of support from listeners.

Murray, who opened his first show on Tuesday (January 7) with **Eminem**'s 'Lose Yourself', admitted he was "absolutely shitting it" before he went live. However, he kicked off by winding up listeners in his first link, joking that Blue and One True Voice would be on later.

The new show, broadcast 8-10pm, Tuesday to Thursday, revealed a much broader music policy than the *Evening Session* it replaces. The playlist on the debut show included tracks by **Nas**, **Panjabi MC**, **The Flaming Lips** and *NME* Hot List 2003 band, **The Sleepy Jackson**.

Speaking to *NME*, Murray said the key to the show is being passionate about what they play.

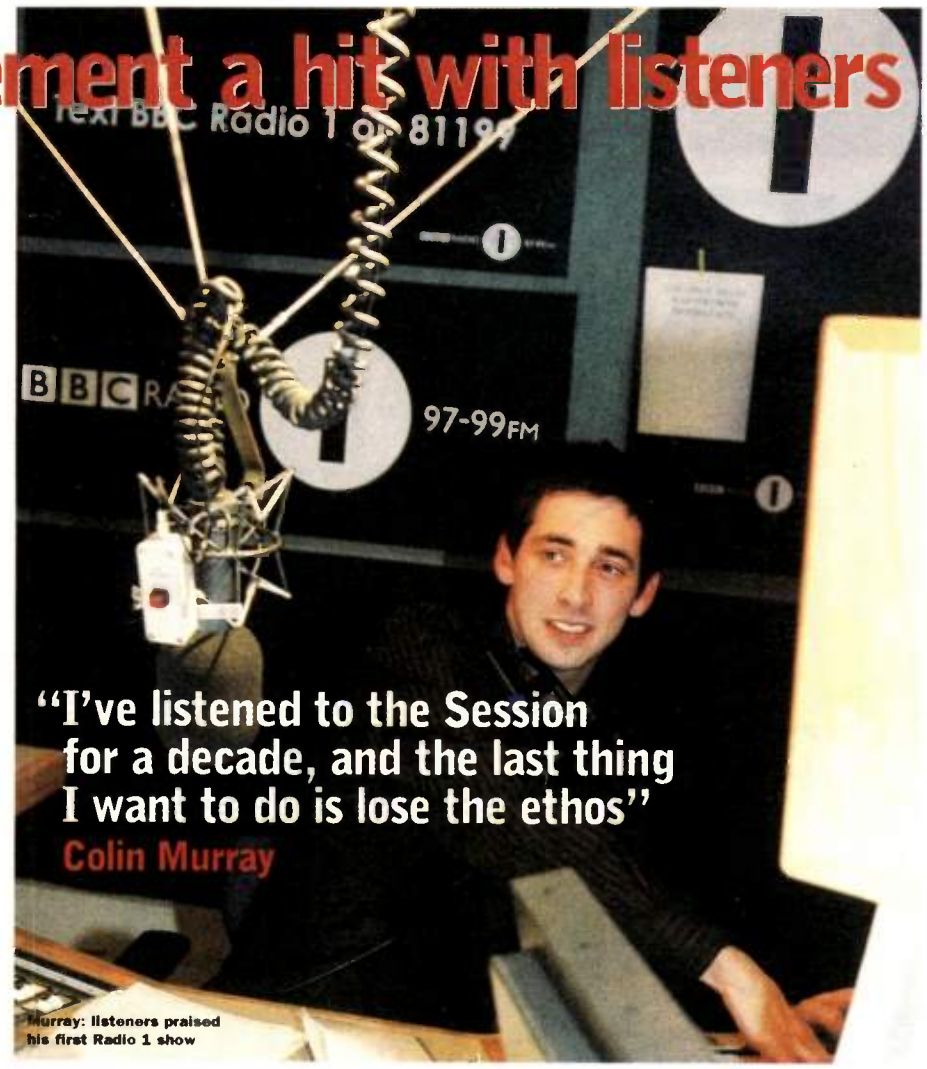
"I've listened to the *Session* for a decade, and the last thing I want to do is lose the ethos," he said. "What we are doing is very fast paced and akin to what someone would do during the day, but the music certainly isn't."

The slot previously belonged to indie icon Steve Lamacq, who presented the *Evening Session* for 11 years. Murray said Lamacq gave him tremendous support, speaking loudly in favour of Murray getting the job.

Xfm's Zane Lowe, who was also up for the Radio 1 job but faced contractual problems with the London station, texted Murray to congratulate him after he finished the first show. **The Cooper Temple Clause** also faxed their support, and listeners sent in more than 300 positive emails.

COLIN MURRAY

Age: 25
Born: Belfast
First job: Gravedigger
Top five albums: Snow Patrol 'When It's All Over We Still Have To Clear Up', Deus 'In A Bar Under The Sea', The Beatles 'White Album', Beastie Boys 'Ill Communication', The Flaming Lips 'Satellite Heart'
Best gig: The Flaming Lips, Glastonbury 2000
Previous work: *RI:SE*, *Evening Session In Northern Ireland*, *Liquid News*. Currently co-presents Channel 4 music show *Born Sloppy* with Sara Cox.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"I've listened to the Session for a decade, and the last thing I want to do is lose the ethos"
Colin Murray

Murray: listeners praised his first Radio 1 show

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDY WILLSHER

NME AWARDS SHOWS 2003

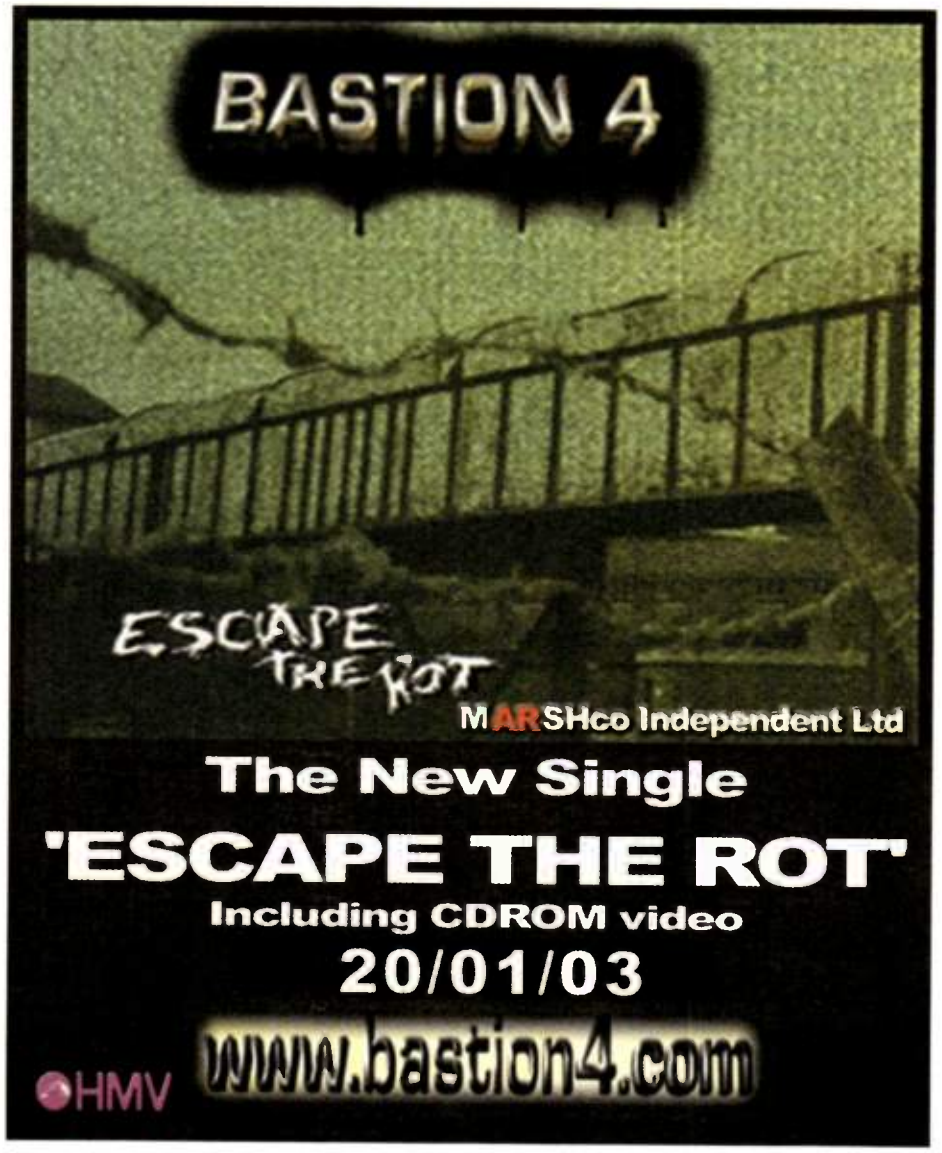
More bands announced

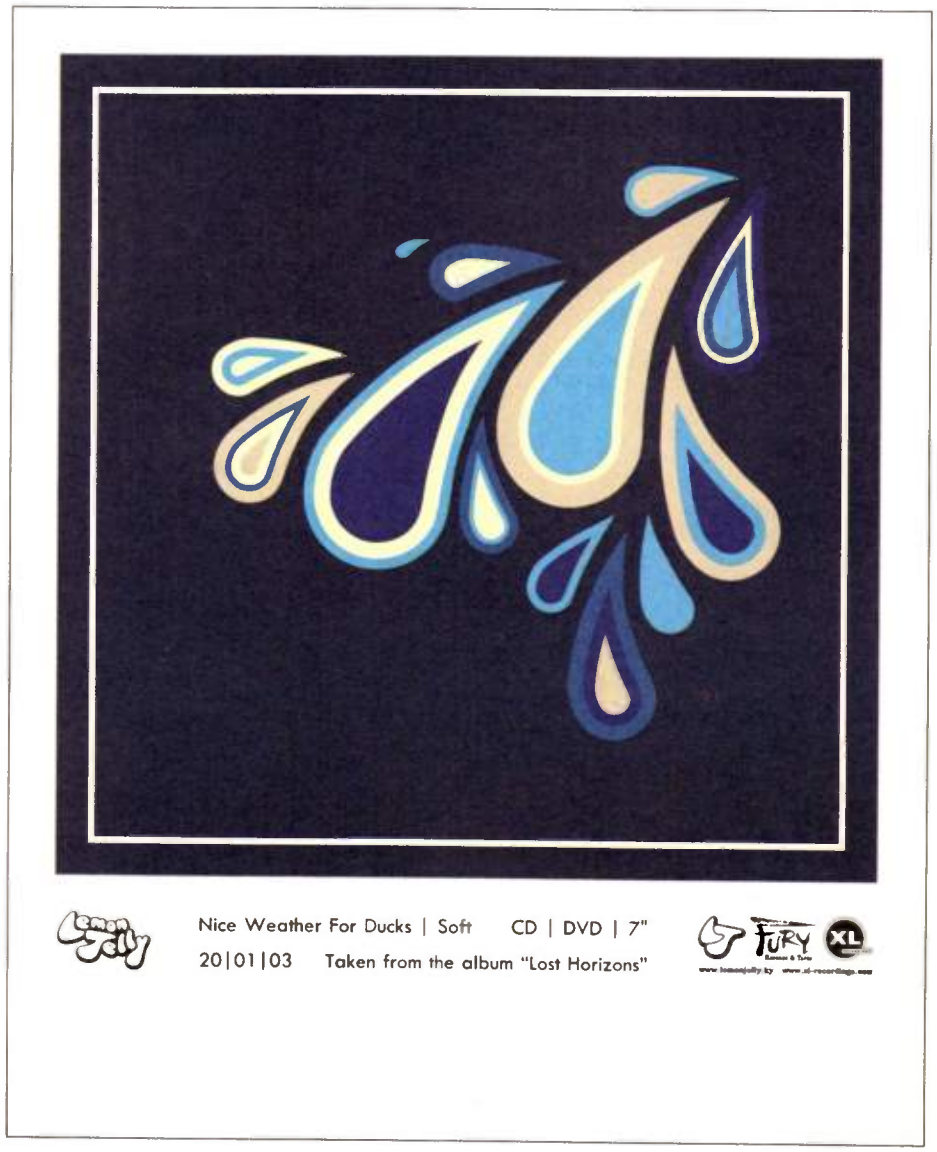
Aqualung and The Warlocks (below) are the latest additions to February's already legendary *NME* Awards Shows.

Aqualung headline the gig at the Scala in London on February 4. The introspective London outfit are supported by San Franciscan psycho-rockers The Warlocks (see the *NME* Hot List section), who make their long-awaited UK debut at the show.

Further support acts are yet to be announced.

A 50p donation from each ticket, costing £11.60, will be donated to the charity Scope.





More Massive ads!

ANTI-WAR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WILL BE A CONSTANT ALL YEAR SAYS 3-D

Massive Attack's **Robert '3-D' Del Naja** and **Blur**'s **Damon Albarn** are planning a second set of "more direct" anti-war adverts in *NME*, as the countdown to war against Iraq continues.

Last year 3-D and Albarn designed and financed a number of adverts which appeared in *NME*, aimed at raising awareness of opposition to any British involvement in a US-led attack on Iraq. The pair are working with CND and the Stop The War coalition, who are organising an awareness campaign of the potential perils of such a strike.

Now, 3-D has told *NME* that a new selection of adverts will appear to highlight a second anti-war demonstration in London on February 15.

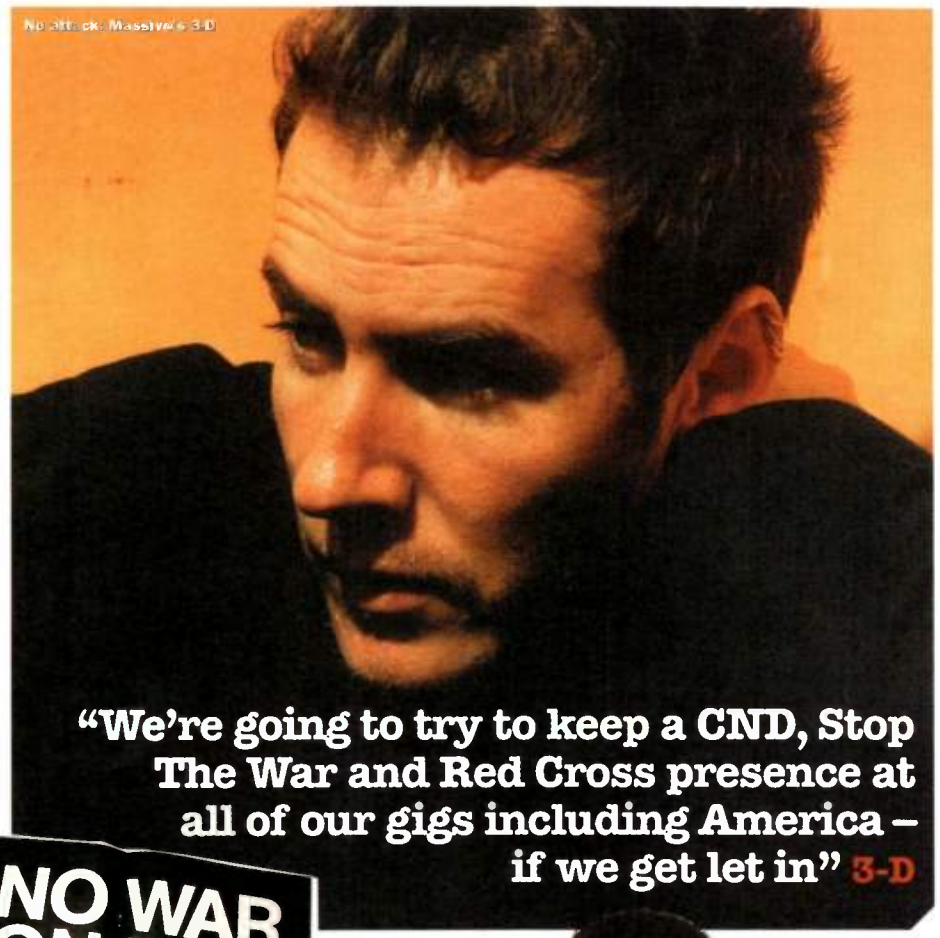
"The situation is the same as last year," he told *NME*. "We did the ads prior to the march. This time around we'll be lobbying Parliament on January 21 and then we're going to do the march on February 15.

"I've got to talk to Damon about it at greater length but I'd like it to be more direct. It's becoming more and more transparent, the reason for this war, and it's about the global economy and it's about oil. And I'd like to get quotes from people like *(political writer)* John Pilger and *(writer/film-maker)* Michael Moore."

Massive Attack will be on tour throughout the year, and will try to get the message across wherever they play – including when they visit the US.

"With the last petition, about 20,000 people went to sign saying they'd seen the *NME* ads. Me and Damon have been talking about doing TV ads and ads in national papers, but we've got to get a budget together.

"We're going to try to keep a CND, Stop The War and Red Cross presence at all of our gigs around the whole world, starting in the Far East, Europe and eventually into America – if we get let in!" he joked. "I don't want to bore people to death with it but we're going to keep a silent presence there all the way."



"We're going to try to keep a CND, Stop The War and Red Cross presence at all of our gigs including America – if we get let in" 3-D

Massive Attack are also planning on releasing the **Sinéad O'Connor**-sung 'A Prayer For England', a song taken from their new album '100th Window', and donate the funds to charity.

He concluded: "We're thinking of releasing 'A Prayer For England' in spring and having all the proceeds for that go to the Red Cross and any other peace organisations. We're going to keep the attention in the right place as far as we can."

Tankian and Morello risk arrest feeding homeless

Audioslave's **Tom Morello** and **System Of A Down**'s **Serj Tankian** have risked arrest to help the homeless of Santa Monica.

The pair recently formed the activist group Axis Of Justice to raise awareness of political and social issues across the world.

At a press conference in Santa Monica, the pair spoke out against a city ruling on programmes which distribute food to the needy. Local groups now have to abide by large-event food safety standards if they want to help the homeless, which is unworkable according to campaigners.

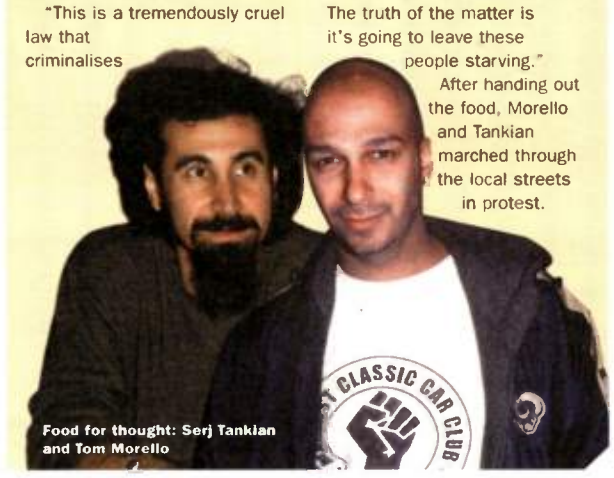
Tom Morello told *MTV News*: "When Axis Of Justice first heard of this law, we said the first day it goes into effect, lunch is on us. We'll continue to do it in defiance of the law. I'm not worried police are going to show up and arrest us, I'm worried homeless people are going to be hungry tonight.

"This is a tremendously cruel law that criminalises compassion. In a city as wealthy as Santa Monica, there's no reason everybody shouldn't have a home and enough to eat, along with the appropriate job training or mental heath services or drug or alcohol rehabilitation, whatever they need to get back on their feet. Those are the things the city council should be focusing on, not trying to deny hungry people food."

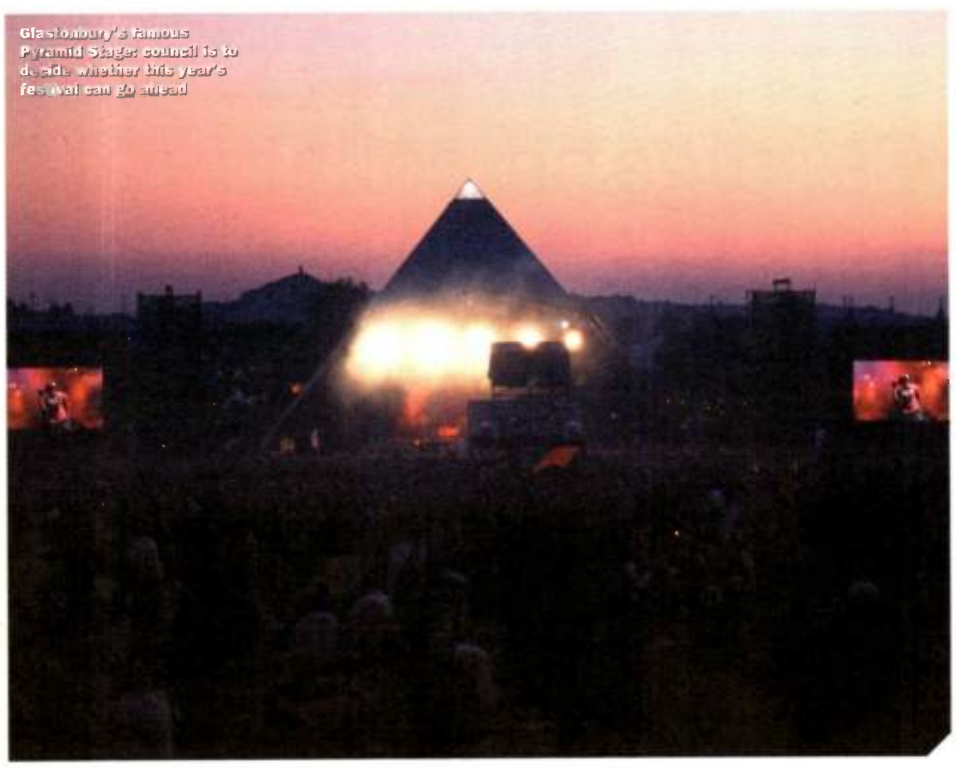
The city council has also banned the homeless from sleeping rough in the downtown district from 11pm to 7am if a business posts a sign requesting them not to.

Tankian commented: "I don't understand. The homeless have never been a problem. Businesses want the homeless out of the way because it doesn't look good. This is Los Angeles – it has to look good. In reality, it's not stopping business. Their sales are at record highs. It doesn't matter. The truth of the matter is it's going to leave these people starving."

After handing out the food, Morello and Tankian marched through the local streets in protest.



Food for thought: Serj Tankian and Tom Morello



Glastonbury's famous Pyramid Stage: council is to decide whether this year's festival can go ahead

PHOTOGRAPHY: HAMISH BROWN/LFI/RETNA

Glasto future to be decided next month

The future of **Glastonbury** 2003 could be decided as early as next month.

The regulatory board of Mendip District Council recently refused a public entertainment licence for the event. A new application has been received from the festival organisers, and a meeting will take place on February 17 to consider the new application.

The council turned down the festival's first licence application after a five-hour meeting on December 12. It concluded with a five-four vote against the licence for the festival, which is scheduled to run from June 27-29. **REM** have already confirmed their headline slot on June 27.

Although the application was not opposed by police, concerns were raised over problems this year in villages near the site of the music event in Pilton.

The council was worried about security for Pilton and surrounding villages, environmental damage and the unsuitability of the site for such a large event.

'There's nothing cheap about his novelistic range and ambition. Lovers drink, confess and break their arms in seven places, our hero beats himself up like a broodier Brel/Bukowski and we're reminded that music can matter like murder'

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Monkey magic: Ian Brown (right) as he might look in the Potter movie role

Brown's off to Hogwarts!

FORMER ROSES MAN CONJURES UP BIZARRE NEW CAREER MOVE WITH HARRY POTTER ROLE

Ian Brown is to pay a visit to Hogwarts with a cameo appearance in the next **Harry Potter** movie!

Directed by Alfonso Cuarón, the third film in the series, *Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban* is due to hit screens next year.

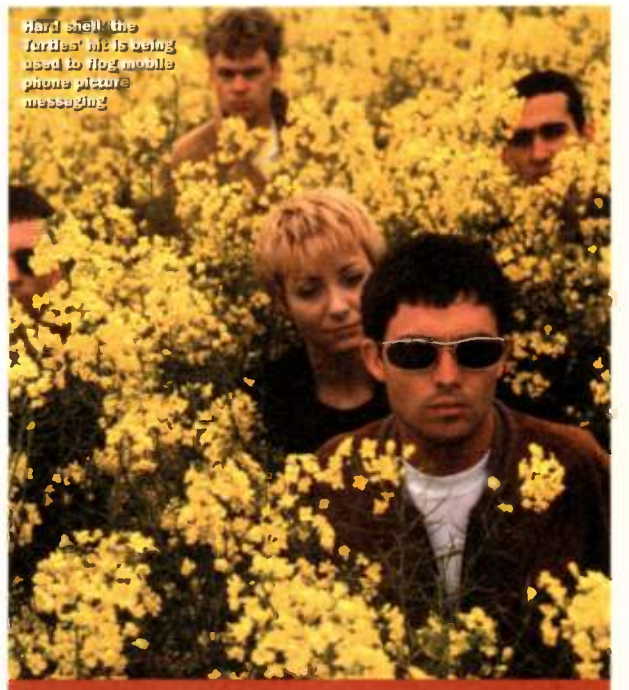
Based on the massively successful JK Rowling book of the same name, the film follows the children's character in his third year at Hogwarts school for wizards, and is likely to be one of the biggest grossing movies in history on its release.

Sources have told *NME* that King Monkey signed up for a role after being introduced to the casting agent on the project.

"He's having a screen test for a speaking part but if that doesn't work out he'll get a bit part"
NME's Mancunian source

"He's going to have a screen test for a speaking part but if that doesn't work out I think he'll be getting a bit part in the movie somewhere or other," a Manchester source told *NME*.

Outside the world of wizards and warlocks, Brown is back in the studio, working on what will become his fourth solo album. Currently untitled, the follow-up to 'Music Of The Spheres' is likely to be released later this year.



Hard shell: the Turtles' hit is being used to flog mobile phone picture messaging

For those about to Mock: Turtles reform

Madchester veterans **The Mock Turtles** are set for a comeback more than a decade after their heyday, thanks to a mobile phone company.

Vodafone are using the band's 1991 hit 'Can You Dig It?' in their current TV ad campaign, which features David Beckham plugging picture messaging.

Now the band are set to blast into the Top 10 on the back of the heavy-rotation campaign, with the single – a potential Number One according to industry insiders – being remixed by **Fatboy Slim** and re-released on January 27 by Virgin.

'Can You Dig It?' was the Manchester quintet's only Top 20 hit, reaching Number 18 in March 1991.

The band, fronted by **Martin Coogan** – brother of comedian **Steve** – continued gigging until as recently as three years ago.

"I got a phone call from EMI asking my permission to use it, saying I could make thousands and thousands of pounds. I thought long and hard about it and said 'Yes'!" Coogan told *NME*.

The single will be followed on February 10 by a 'Best Of' compilation, which will feature old material alongside new songs. There is also talk of live dates.

The Mock Turtles are the second band to be given a shot in the arm after featuring in a Vodafone ad. **The Dandy Warhols** were on a downward slide when the phone company picked up on their single 'Bohemian Like You' for an ad campaign. It only reached a dismal Number 42 on its initial release in September 2000. But on its re-release in November 2001, after intensive exposure on the adverts, the song soared to Number Five.

The Cardigans: friends united for new album

PHOTOGRAPHY: MOVIESTORE/RETNA/STEVE DOUBLE

Cardigans collaborate with all of Sweden on new album

The Cardigans have formed a Swedish new rock revolution supergroup on their new album – featuring members of **The Hives**, **The Soundtrack Of Our Lives** and **The Hellacopters**.

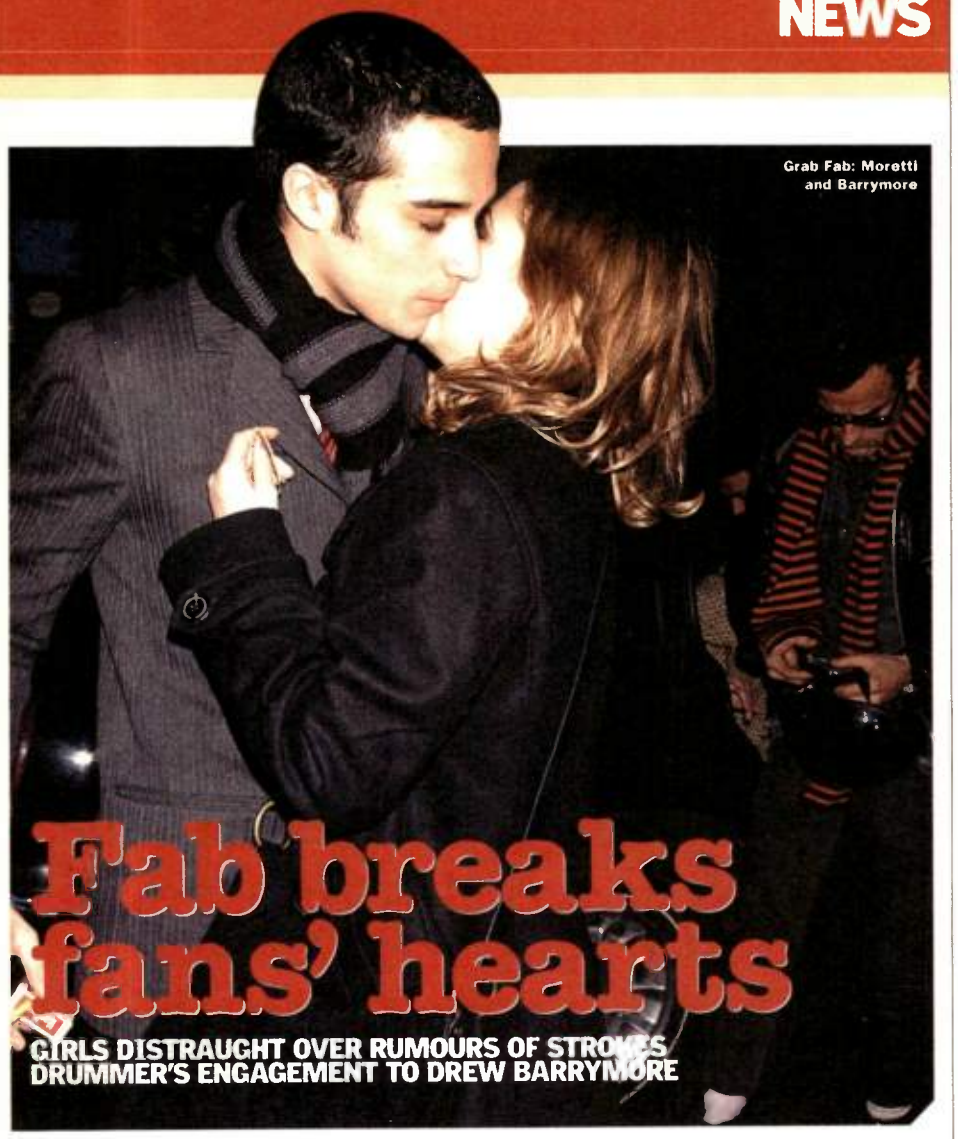
The group release 'Long Gone Before Daylight' on March 24. The follow-up to 1998's 'Gran Turismo', the first single from the record will be 'For What It's Worth', which has a tentative release date of March 10.

Although recorded in studios across Europe, 'Long Gone Before Daylight' features the cream of the current Swedish rock scene. Guest appearances come from The Hives' **Howlin' Pelle Almqvist**, **Ebbot Lundberg** of Soundtrack and **Nick Royale** from The Hellacopters.

Speaking exclusively to *NME* from her native Sweden, singer **Nina Persson** said that she duets with Lundberg on the track 'Live And Learn'.

"We needed some good male voices," she said. "The guys in the band don't really have football choir strength so we went for our rock friends! Ebbot is doing a duet with me on a song called 'Live And Learn', and Nick and Pelle are singing together."

The group are expected to play festival shows to support the record this summer but will also perform a select number of acoustic gigs "here and there" around the release of the album.



Grab Fab: Moretti and Barrymore

Fab breaks fans' hearts

GIRLS DISTRAUGHT OVER RUMOURS OF STROKES DRUMMER'S ENGAGEMENT TO DREW BARRYMORE

The Strokes' drummer **Fabrizio Moretti** was rumoured to have got engaged to his girlfriend, Hollywood actress **Drew Barrymore**, last week – prompting a flood of distraught emails to *NME*.

US tabloid the *New York Post* claimed Barrymore was considering a "big, traditional wedding", possibly at *ER* star **George Clooney**'s Italian villa.

Moretti, 22, met 27-year-old Barrymore backstage after a Strokes gig in California last April.

Following the report, gutted female fans contacted *NME*, heartbroken at the rumours.

"Even though he's had his hair chopped off, Fab's easily the sexiest man in rock," one wrote. "I hope Drew knows just how lucky she is. I'm thinking of starting an online petition to get this wedding stopped!"

"Why is she taking him from us?" cried Elaine Masters. "Who does that leave? Jack White? He's more interesting than sexy."

Carol Malinga was more straightforward in her reaction: "NOOOOOOOOOO. No no no!"

However, there may yet be hope for the heartbroken masses. A US spokesperson played down the reports, and the *New York Post* journalist later softened her story.

The band's US management representative said: "Do you really think he'd get married that young? They're writing the next album, that's their main focus."

"I'm thinking of starting an online petition to get this wedding stopped!" Strokes fan

Wayne Coyne Vs Beck

Wayne Coyne, the magnificently kooky frontman with the **Flaming Lips**, has dissed **Beck**, the snake-hipped *nouveau*-Dylan. Yes, that's Beck, the man for whom the Lips acted as backing band on a recent US tour.

Beck, you see, decided against a similar tour in Europe and the UK because, says Coyne, his record wasn't selling.

"His record was just not embraced that much – that's probably most of it," Coyne said. "There were rumours a while ago that he didn't want to fly but that's not true at all. Since I've been with him he's flown five or six times. I think he'd go with or without us if he thought it was worth going for."

That's not all.

"I think *(Beck)* knows he's a little bit of a diva, he's kind of high maintenance, especially when you compare him to the way I work," said Coyne. "I mean, I don't really need people to drive me around town, when I check into a hotel I don't check out because I don't like the way the pillows smell or something like that."

And there's more...

"It'd be 2am, we'd arrive in some city and I'd just simply get into the hotel and go to sleep. He would have, sometimes, these irrational rules like you're not supposed to be able to see the highway from his window."

Then there's the limousines.

"He would take limousines when he could have just got in the van. To me, if I was going to take a limo, I'd say, 'Hey fellas, let's all get in a limousine, we'll get a couple of strippers, let's have a time of it!'

But Coyne stresses that everything's alright *really*.

"He knows I'd call him a diva because he would go onstage and make fun of it himself."

The pair plan to settle the argument like gentlemen with an early-morning duel. Dressed as rabbits. Except Beck, who'll be in a limo complaining that the morning dew is causing havoc with his hair.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LFI/RETNA

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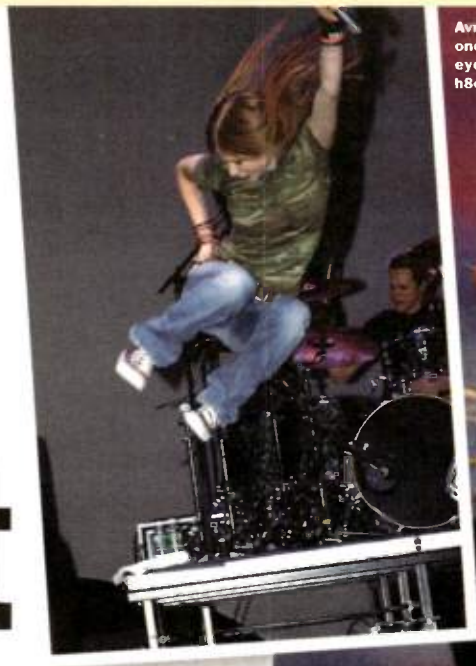
How Avril did it her way



Avril Lavigne: one in the eye for the h8ers

THE GRUNGY TEEN POP SENSATION WHO'S SHOT TO THE TOP THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH

Things keep getting better for **Avril Lavigne**. Just before the new year, **Dave Grohl** *(below right)* was declaring the 18-year-old Canadian teen-angst superstar better than **The Vines**. Now she's done the unthinkable and ended **Robbie Williams'** *(below)* six-week run at the top of the albums chart with 'Let Go', an album that's already been out for over five months and spawned two hit singles, 'Complicated' and 'Sk8er Boi'.

While 'Escapology' was bought in spades by well-meaning relatives for their nephews' and nieces' Christmas stockings, once those kids had Christmas money in their pockets it seems they bought something they really wanted – and rather than the latest kit-off TV talent show wannabes, they went for a spotty, guitar-wielding Canadian in baggy pants and a soiled T-shirt. Perhaps tellingly, in the week that Lavigne's sales soared and took her to Number One, sales of traditional pop acts like **Atomic Kitten**, **Will Young** and **Blue** took a dive.

"We've seen the same slow-burn sales approach with David Gray and Coldplay," explains HMV spokesman Genarro Cestaldo. "While Avril's in a totally different field, the results are similar – this is an album that's come out in the second half of the year and done OK, and in Lavigne's case word of mouth has been the key. Recommendation is better than any marketing and with decent word of mouth an album takes on a life of its own."

Lavigne's international profile would certainly suggest so: even before Christmas 'Let Go' had sold almost seven million copies (including 3.6 million in the States) and achieved 22 straight weeks in the Top Ten of the *Billboard* albums chart. Lavigne had already become the first artist album in the history of America's SoundScan sales chart to sustain five weeks of sales growth. Whether or not Lavigne has joined labelmate **Pink** in a bona fide quest to destroy pop from within, she certainly walks the walk. On hearing initial mixes of the 'Let Go' sessions, Lavigne says she threw a wobbler ("too pop, too many programmed drums") and took herself off to Los Angeles to tell the producers it needed changing. "Everyone looked at me like I was crazy," she later recalled, but, the way she tells it, she got her own way. (Perhaps her label boss, **LA Reid**, could do with assertiveness classes – he was also shouted down by Pink who, like Lavigne, insisted that her music take a rockier edge.)

Girl power: Avril's triumph at the MTV Video Music Awards, 2002

The defining Lavigne moment of 2002 came at the MTV Video Music Awards, where she was presented with the award for Best Newcomer by *American Idol* winner **Kelly Clarkson**. Lavigne conspicuously wrestled herself out of Fuller & Cowell's latest product's warm embrace, and grabbed the award. The sequence was so notable – and Clarkson's expression so horrified – that clips were swiftly emailed around the world, but it was not without irony; for Lavigne's big break was also on a talent show, organised by an Ottawa radio station. The prize was an opportunity to sing with **Shania Twain**. Twain was the teenager's idol – perhaps at odds with Lavigne's punky look and there are plenty of commentators keen to dismiss the star's current image as more than a little manipulated.

Perhaps inevitably, many of these are seasoned industry hacks who've been written out of her story. **Cliff Fabri** was involved with Lavigne during the earlier stages of her career but suddenly left the project two weeks after 'Complicated' was written with one of several songwriting teams who collaborated with Lavigne on 'Let Go'. He told the *Toronto Star* that Lavigne is "not a skateboarder; not a punk. She is not from the streets. She is from a middle-class family in Napanee. She is from a very safe neighbourhood." When they met, he added, "Her idea of punk was **Blink-182**. She didn't even know who the **Sex Pistols** were."

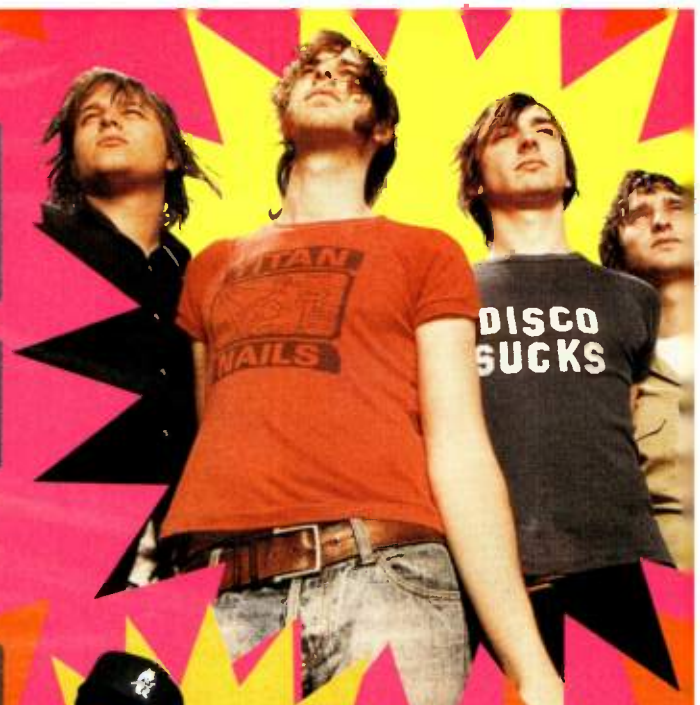
> **"I won't wear skanky clothes that show off my booty, my belly or boobs"**

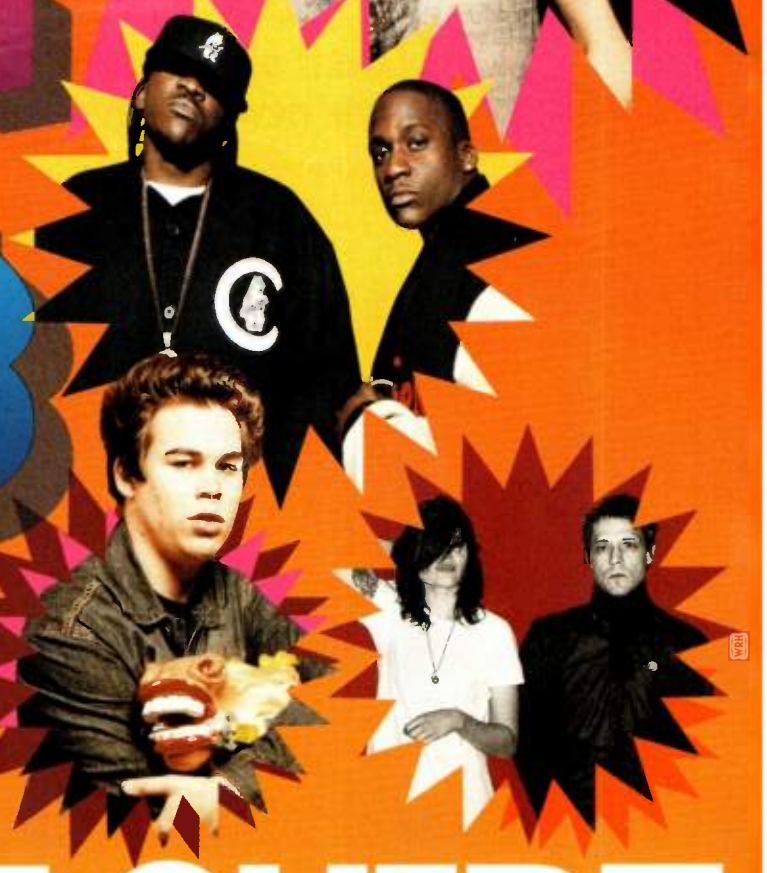
Whether contrived or not, since signing with BMG for a reported $1.25m in autumn 2000, her image has blasted America's synthetic pop acts out of the water and with the gradual rise of 'Let Go' to Number One looks to be doing the same in the UK, without resorting to the usual clichés applied to female pop teens. Indeed, at the end of the last year Lavigne told a US teen magazine: "Today, I rejected some gorgeous publicity shots because they just didn't look like me. I won't wear skanky clothes that show off my booty, my belly or boobs. I have a great body. I could be Britney. I could be better than Britney."

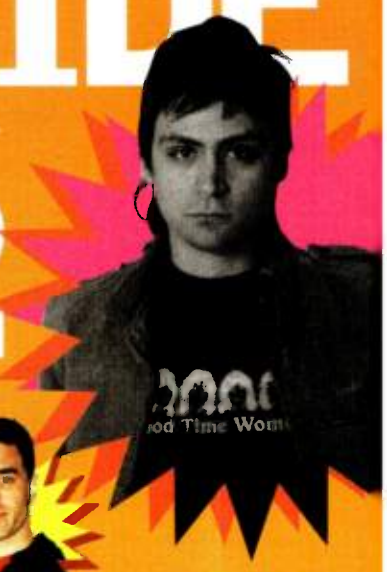
Time will tell, but while the *Dawson's Creek*-style angst of 'Sk8er Boi' and 'Complicated' are unlikely to provoke rioting even on the streets of Canada, Lavigne's harshest critics still agree that in terms of introducing teens to music, she's preferable to the *Pop Idol* crowd. The real test will come in March as Lavigne touches down for her first full-scale UK tour.

TEXT: PETER ROBINSON PHOTOGRAPHY: BIGPICTURESPHOTO.COM/RETNA/PA/WIRE IMAGE

NME THE HOT LIST 2003







THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO THIS YEAR'S GREATEST NEW BANDS

PHOTOGRAPHY: PEROJINC.COM/DEAN CHALKLEY/COLIN LANE/JAMIE BEEDEN/IAN JENNINGS/ELLIS PARRINDER/SEBASTIAN ARTZ/HAMISH BROWN

KINGS OF LEON

Sons of a preacher man forsake Bible college to bring the new rock revolution to the Deep South

Text: Pat Long Photography: Colin Lane

We're lucky to have the Kings Of Leon around. When this Nashville-based quartet were growing up, the three brothers in the band assumed that they'd follow their father into the family business, forsaking any dreams of becoming pro musicians.

"All of our friends would go to Bible college after high school," remembers singing guitarist Caleb Followill, the one with the Old Testament beard. "Two years learning how to preach. That was just what everybody did. And we pretty much knew that was what we were going to do, too."

Today, the Kings Of Leon are here as living proof that evangelism's loss is our gain. They've also decided that they're going to show *NME* a bit of the real Deep South, away from the tourist traps selling $90 cowboy hats and shoddy keyrings bearing hard-living country legend Hank Williams' toothy image. What this actually means is a detour off the beaten track to a roadside diner for huge greasy bowls full of super-sweet fried corn bread, battered shrimp, corn on the cob, barbecued ribs and collard greens (whatever they are).

Because, like most people from around these parts, the four are both extremely hospitable and deeply proud of their heritage. What makes them special is the way that they've translated the music that they grew up around – church gospel, blues, indie, sloppy garage, country – into something astonishing. Of the eight demo-quality songs *NME*'s heard so far, each and every one is already cocksure enough to be a single. 'Red Morning Light' is a charmingly scuzzy racket bolstered by a million dollar chorus. 'Holy Roller Novocaine' a venomous swipe at an Elmer Gantry-style religious charlatan, 'California Waiting' a blissfully sunny lament, 'Molly's Chambers' a rumbly anthem... and this from a band who've only been together a little over six months, and half of whom are still too peach-fuzzy to get served in their hometown bars.

Plus, although they look like they should be selling pot in the parking lot outside a gig by southern rock titans Lynryd Skynryd in 1973 and Caleb's arseless jeans are probably illegal in most states, the foursome are faultlessly polite and good-natured, evidently a product of their churchified upbringing.

"We've had," says bespectacled drummer Nathan evenly, "a life full of character."

As understatements go, it's a pearl.

The story goes something like this. Caleb, Nathan and bassist Jared Followill are all brothers. Taciturn guitarist Matthew Followill is their cousin. As children, the three siblings travelled round the South with their dad, an ex-hippy Neil Young fan who'd given up a life of brawling and boozing to become a preacher ordained in the United Pentecostal Church. Proper holy roller stuff, in other words. Clapping, singing, shouting. The full works.

While Pa Followill was giving his sermon, the adolescent Caleb would sing and Nathan would bash away at the drums to help spread the good word.

"The churches we'd preach in were very active in the worship and the instruments. You had everything from a kazoo to an organ going on. It was pretty wild," remembers Nathan.

"We preached in churches where literally we were the only white people in the room," says Caleb, wiping barbecue sauce from his fingers. "We were pretty young and travelled around all the time. We never stayed in one place more than about five years, so we never got to go to high school and make proper friends."

This rootless upbringing meant that the brothers are now almost telepathically close: not only do they all swap clothes, but they either alltalkatexactlythesametime or finish each other's sentences.

"For the first 12 years of my life the furthest I'd ever slept from him and him was 30 feet," laughs Nathan, pointing at Caleb and Jared. "From one end of the trailer to the other. We slept in cars, motel rooms, in church. We didn't have money or any material things and we couldn't have friends for very long, so all we really had was each other."

It gets weirder. Dad was eventually defrocked after he became an alcoholic, and the family was so poor that last Christmas was the first year that the brothers were able to afford to go and buy a tree, rather than stealing one from the woods.

Now that's all changed, mind. They recently bought a house in the Nashville suburbs (complete with swimming pool and basement rehearsal space) with their first royalty advance, which the band all share with their other cousin and roadie Daniel.

"I believe that this is the first time a house has actually been owned in our family," says Nathan excitedly. "No-one has ever actually made a mortgage payment before."

Jared reckons that most of the Followill family are either God folk or "real white trash rednecks".

"Dad's side of the family are real mountain people," explains Nathan. "They drink creek water and only eat stuff that they've shot. About two years ago, our cousin built a house in the forest and the last time we went back it was nothing but a concrete slab. Their methamphetamine lab had blown up."

To escape this lurid Southern Gothic/*Beverley Hillbillies*-type environment, they started the band properly early last year, taking the name of their Grandpa Leon and playing without a bassist until Jared started to learn in the summer. They'd been writing music that "uses a lot of the rhythms that we learned in church", according to Caleb, but the prohibitive country-only policy of most of Nashville's bars and labels meant that these four thrift-store-clad Strokes fans found getting gigs hard. It took another Americana-indebted act to really give the Kings Of Leon the impetus to continue.

"When I heard The White Stripes, it just gave me chillbumps," says Nathan, "because I thought, 'Maybe we can do this, and maybe we can do it kind of cool, too.'"

Of course, unlike Jack and Meg, the Kings Of Leon are (a) proper Southerners and (b) actually related. Which naturally means that Liam'n'Noel-type fisticuffs are never far from the agenda.

Nathan: "Being family, it means that if someone wants to punch the drummer in the face, we can still make up and play a show that night..."

Caleb: "We had our first show coming up and it was pretty nerve-wracking, as it was the first time that the whole band was going to get up there and play, and the day before the stress just finally got to us and we had a huge fight. Me and Nathan had to be pulled apart..."

Nathan: "...So at the first show I had to wear make-up because I had claw marks down my face. I had a patch of hair ripped out. The worst thing was that I spilled all my weed on the carpet. At the end of the day we were down on our hands and knees with a fine tooth comb trying to pick out nuggets."

All of which is excellent stuff, obviously. But what's better is that the Kings are coming your way, touring Britain and stopping off at an *NME* Awards Show on the way. So do they have any message for the people of this country?

Nathan: "Er, long live the Queen?"

The Queen? Forget it. Long live the Kings.

"The churches we'd preach in had everything from a kazoo to an organ going on. It was pretty wild" Nathan Followill

Kings Of Leon's as-yet-untitled debut single is released via Hand Me Down Records in late February. They support The Coral at their *NME* Awards Show at London WC2 Astoria (February 11) and play London W1 Metro Club (12)

Almost famous: Kings Of Leon (l-r) Jared, Caleb and Nathan Followill plus cousin Matthew

THE KILLS

Want to know why The Kills are 2003's coolest contenders? Their exclusive, none-more-messy tour diary explains everything...

Text: The Kills
Photography: The Kills

BRIXTON ACADEMY..... 06/12/02..07/12/02

fuck... our gear looks so beat up and small set up in front of primal scream's... they got a whole city of amps and cabinets and wires and lights and little digital displays and buttons and faders... it's like someone set up xxx a tiny junk stall outside an expensive department store... all our gear has xx the shakes.. the amps are spilling their guts out their grille-cloths and the guitars keep cutting out, buzzing and humming above the screams of the soundman... "hey VV ?"..."what??..".. "..the gears fukk'd and the people gonna hate ya..".... "..fuck the gear...fuck the people..." goodbye soundcheck ... i hate you.....

LIVERPOOL — [redacted] 9/12/02
MOVE PAST THE SCIATION CLINIC
THIS PLACE IS GORGEOUS VODKA STOLI
ON STAGE AN WATCHED THEM PLAY TONIGHT
WE ARE AWAKE FOREVER / I CAN'T
REMEMBER IF WE LEFT AND WENT TO THEIR
HOTEL OR OURS ALL NIGHT PEOPLE SCREAMING
IN THE HALLS

FOUND THE BACKDOOR, FROZEN BUILDING
BLACK COFFEE (STYROFOAM CUP)
SMOKING OVER THE SUN HOROSCOPE
SAGITTARIUS SAYS *** NUMB MOUTH AT
SOUNDCHECK - DEVILS IN
LOVE THIS ALREADY

Sheffield → BOBBY TUCKER

SHEFFIELD OCTAGON...12/12/02

when we first started the kills there was a whole issue about whether or not to get a drummer... we talked about the kind of drummer we'd allow in the kills and, a couple of bottles of wine later, had decided that our first drummer would have to be either; (1) mo tucker OR/ (2) bobby gillespie.

today in sheffield bobby gillespie became our first drummer. it was in KISSY KISSY.. hair all over his face.. arms up over his head and down pounding the floor tom BANG BANG BANG gonna stab yr kissy kissy mouth... flashes going off all over the place... if anyone's got photographs of that then they should send them in to us cos bobby swears it's the first time he's drummed since jesus and mary chain. that's my favourite thing that's happened all year... we get so happy that i have to break down the bathroom door and pick VV up off the floor... fall onto the tour bus and back to primal scream's hotel... the rest is a bit sketchy.. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx i think we all ended up in bobby's room cos that's what the photos show.. and there xx were some complaints lodged at the reception desk at around 8:00 am so i guess we were up til then....

MANCHESTER ACADEMY.....13/12/02

only slept for x an hour and a half.. hotel checkout was ten-fucking-thirty... we both have terrible anxiety attacks and the drive to manchester scares us to death.. get to the hotel.. check in and go to the room... xx if you out-stretch your arms you can touch all the walls.. it's one of the smallest rooms that a person has ever had to pay for and there's just one tiny camp bed in it..xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx we swap it for a room with writing on the walls and blood on the sheets. it costs an extra £20...

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx get to the academy.. bobby and mani and innes come up and eveybody apologises xxxxx for their behaviour the night before.. nobody knows what anyone's talking about... a couple of attempts to fill in the gaps xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.. anxiety attack happens again.. xx make a pact there and then.. "primal scream the kills mystery train expressway to yr skull X death valley '69" ...

.... watch primal scream from the side of the stage ... the world's run out of bands like this.. it's incredible xxxxxxxx.... xxxx back to primal's hotel .. again, things get a bit xxxxxxxxx blurred from here on... bobby's room again.. maybe.. record after record... arguement about the ramones... arguement about the doors.. high fives over dock boggs... leave to do the auto festival with pulp royksopp, fourtet, james yorkston... the beatings replace us for the next primal scream show... primal scream call us traitors... something like tha

MANCHESTER - WHEN YOU'RE FEELING THAT OUT OF IT
AND SHAVEN AND STAYING OUT AND FUCKED
PLAY BETTER. YOU THINK LESS AND PLAY BETTER
MAKE UP FOR WHATEVER * DISASTER YOU DONE

EDINBURGH CORN EXCHANGE...16/12/02

i can't remember this one...i know we got very high and i had a fight with bobby in his hotel room.. i think it was the arguement about the doors again... he was trying to strangle me an VV to death. i hurt my knee pretty bad and bobby said i kicked him in the kidney.. stayed up laughing the rest of the night. xxxxxx

Edin —

HOROSCOPE SMOKING VODKA DIZZY DUCKING
INTO ALL THE LITTLE ROOMS FIST FIGHT
ON A HOTEL BED. WAKE UP IN ANOTHER HOTEL
BED. THEY THREW US OUT AGAIN AT THE
SIMPLONS

Glasgow..

CHECKED INTO THE HOTEL
FOUR BALLROOMS, CHRISTMAS DINNER
ON A PRETTY TABLE ON THE DANCE
FLOOR SERVED BY BOYS IN NAZI UNIFORMS
LISTENING TO THE BEACH BOYS CHRISTMAS
ALBUM. THIS AIN'T SUPPOSED TO END.

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DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL

Thoroughbred emo heartbreaker bares all. Listen and weep

Text: April Long Photography: Jamie Beeden

Walking into a Dashboard Confessional gig is a bit like stumbling across a cult communion. Twenty-seven-year-old Chris Carrabba – a tiny man who calls himself Dashboard Confessional to "take the heat off being solo" – inspires such rabid devotion in his fans that every gig is like a revivalist meeting, every member of the audience singing along, word-perfect, to every fragile, heart-scarring song.

"It's an overwhelming feeling, because it's not about adulation, but participation," says Chris. "My lyrics are an anchor for me, and it's amazing that other people feel the same way and interpret them according to their own experiences."

In other words, he's emo, sad on the outside as *well* as the inside, and his UK debut LP 'The Places You Have Come To Fear The Most' has already established the Florida-based Carrabba Stateside as the genre's reluctant poster boy. A former skate punk and primary school teacher, he approaches songwriting like a therapy session, venting all the confusion and anger he bottles up in relationships to create poignantly beautiful music like tear-stained anthem 'Living In Your Letters'.

"You wouldn't believe it to hear my music, but I'm actually intensely private," he says. "It's really hard for me to open up, even though I'm more sensitive than most people. That's why I keep things bottled up until they come out in songs. I guess I'd rather write a song than have a temper tantrum."

Carrabba will soon be taking his Confessional on the road in the UK. Bring a tissue.

Dashboard Confessional play London W1 Metro Club on January 16-18

"I keep things bottled up until they come out in songs. I'd rather write a song than have a temper tantrum"

Chairman of the Dashboard: Chris Carrabba

THE HISS

Hiss off: (l-r) Ian, Todd, Mahjula and Adrian

Atlanta's devasssssstingly brilliant new rock revelation

Text: Paul Moody Photography: Dean Chalkley

Hey you! Thought the new rock revolution couldn't get any better? Think again. Imagine a band with a singer more louche than Julian Casablancas, songs as turbo-tuneful as The Vines and a gonzo rock'n'roll spirit to match The Datsuns. Pretty good, huh? Well, they're here, and they're called The Hiss. Comparisons are futile, but let's have some anyway. Debut single 'Triumph' sounds like The Verve's 'All In The Mind' played by the Stones circa smack-soaked 1972 classic 'Exile On Main Street'. The song is inspired, explains singer Adrian Barrera, by a cult psychedelic movie about a motorcycle gang who come back from the dead.

"I liked the imagery because it's sort of what we're doing. We're celebrating rock'n'roll but we're also attacking it like invincible zombies!"

Meanwhile, live rave 'Step Aside' could be what would have happened if The Stooges and 'good period' Oasis had children, while all their other songs have got titles like 'Back On The Radio' and 'Street Research' and sound like all your favourite singles being played at once. On 11.

"We want to combine a really raw punk sound with a chorus you can sing along to," says Adrian, who, even better still, looks like Tobey Maguire in *The Ice Storm* and sings like Liam before the Mafia got hold of him.

The Hiss. They're from Atlanta. They're better than, well, everything.

The Hiss play London WC2 Astoria *NME* Awards Show with The Libertines and The Sights (February 12). Their debut single, 'Triumph', is out February 17 on Loog Records

"We're celebrating rock'n'roll but we're also attacking it like invincible zombies!"

JET

Passion, haircuts and an unfailing belief in rock'n'roll: meet the Antipodean Oasis. Complete with own-label underwear

Text: Alicia Brodersen Photography: Ian Jennings

Jet love the new rock revolution. But they reckon, both in their native Australia and – heck – worldwide, that it's got some way to go.

"We're doing our best to *make* it happen," laments a frustrated Chris Sester, Jet's singing drummer and emaciated Gaz Coombes lookey-likey. "But it's *not* fuckin' happening!

"The thing is," he continues, fervently indicating the VIP tent at Sydney's Homebake Festival, "as soon as I walk out of this fuckin' tent, you go out there and the techno tent is packed. The fuckin' main stage with a 'popular' band is packed. You go to the stage with the little nu-rock bands and *it's* packed. It's not unified!"

You've just read the one reason why this year's most visceral (and probably only) triple-vocal blitzkrieg – fronted by singing guitarists Cam Muncey and Chris' big brother Nick, along with bassist Mark Wilson – may yet make The Datsuns look like Starsailor quaffing rohypnol. In the world of these four vagabonds, rock'n'roll is the only salvation and until people realise that listening to *anything* else and going out to nightclubs "having this mediocre fuckin' existence where you take a pill and have a smile on your face *(is)* bullshit", the situation is a desolate pit on a par with the general fucked-up state of the world today.

Though they're proud to be from Down Under – 'Move On' namechecks hometown Melbourne's Flinders Street station, while Cam wears a home-made T-shirt of the Australian flag with the Union Jack cut out ("No disrespect to England," adds Nick, 23. "But it's just fuckin' ridiculous that someone else's flag is on our flag") – their musical roots are firmly planted in Britain. And, via a malevolent whirlpool of old-school vinyl pre-dating 1975, they're here to push the rock rebellion forward.

Named after a hit by Paul McCartney's post-Beatles band Wings, Jet also love Stones-style country balladry (check the gorgeous 'Come Round Again'), The Beatles themselves ('Sgt Major' aptly sounds like an outtake from 'Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band') and Led Zeppelin, whose stadium riffage stomps through every glorious track. Add the obligatory Oz touch of AC/DC on 'Take It Or Leave It', plus some Ash-style stompalongs, and you'll see that Jet have more than fulfilled their brief of "rock music that you can dance to, like the Stones did". In fact, they're the new Oasis.

Better still, they've got a manifesto – down with dance music! Take Cam's 'Disco Sucks' T-shirt and vehement anti-schlock jock statement 'Rollover DJ' from their debut EP 'Dirty Sweet' (sample lyric: *"I know that you think you're a star/An uptight copyright is all that you are"*) and you've got something that's going to get up more noses than a fresh Colombian consignment at a Libertines show.

"We're not bagging people like The Avalanches, or whoever's being really creative with whatever they do," declares Cam. "We're just bagging people stringing together 200 beats-per-minute songs, one after the other. They're grey people – it's like there's a *haze* around them. They're not bright or terribly inspiring."

All this from a band so well versed in the ways of filthy rock'n'roll they've written an ode to oral sex called 'Cold Hard Bitch' – "I think we're all fans of it," grins Cam angelically – and another about fellow countrymen The Vines (more of which later), put out their only release to date on vinyl because "when you've got vinyl, you love it and you keep it", and sell customised pink bikini knickers at their gigs, sending an autographed pair to the head of their American label Elektra upon signing a reputed £1.2million deal last November. Sir Mick would be proud.

As a six-year-old, Nick would stare at the cover of Abbey Road, listening to 'Something' on repeat. Together, he and Chris rifled through their dad's vinyl collection and pulled out only a handful – including Cat Stevens, Stevie Wonder and Lucio Battisti, the "Frank Sinatra of Italy" (their dad's Italian) – and got lost in music.

By 15, Nick had started a band named Mojo Filter with Cam, previously a trumpeter who'd "felt so fuckin' dorky walking around with a trumpet case" he'd switched to guitar. The two bonded because "there weren't a whole heap of dudes into Led Zep" at their Catholic sports school. Chris was called in when they needed a drummer to replace the original one, who'd constantly disappear on surfing safaris up the coast. Once they'd finished school, the Sesters worked in a spice factory.

"I'm into the art side of things and I'm driving a fuckin' *forklift*," remembers Nick tersely. "You can't *imagine* how fuckin' painful that is for someone like me." Cam, meanwhile, took odd jobs including a stint performing pre-op shaves at the local hospital, so consequently he's "probably seen more scrotums than you guys have your whole lives!" As Cam says, their vehement self-belief was a minor miracle in itself. "I don't know where it came from," he muses. "I don't know *how* we thought we were going to make it. I had faith."

Then, at the beginning of 2002, it all came good. Having spent six years playing the occasional gig and being paid one beer each in return, Jet hooked up with a manager called 'Major' Dave, who told the band he wasn't going to stop pushing them "until you play Wembley". At the same time The Vines were appearing on their first *NME* cover in June, their management had heard Jet's demos and brokered a publishing deal and an offer to co-manage them internationally. By October – when *NME* first mentioned Jet in our Antipodean rock feature – A&R men were flying in from around the world to attend a showcase in Sydney. "Under ten" record companies were negotiating a deal if you believe Cam, while other sources have pitched it at up to 20. In November, the band signed with Elektra (excluding Australasia, where they released the 1,000-only 'Dirty Sweet' on Rubber Records before opting for EMI) because they were "on the same sort of wavelength". But their close association with The Vines hasn't stopped Jet writing songs about them.

"How'd you know that?" splutters Nick, looking genuinely horrified.

"It's not a *real* song," Cam cringes. "We don't want to play it up, we've all met Craig and he's really fuckin' nice. But, y'know, he loves MaccaDees – it's a documented fuckin' fact. We're always making stupid rhyming songs..."

"We've got one going round about everyone we know," verifies Nick quickly. (The band later hint darkly that they've even got one about *NME*.)

"It was a Bob Dylan kinda thing," Cam concedes, adopting a lazy Minnesotan drawl. *"'Oh, my name's Craig Nicholls/I like the burgers, don't like the pickles'..."*

Jet finally took flight with the arrival of Mark Wilson, who turned up two months ago when Jet's old bassist began falling off their "musical frequency".

"There was an idea – with the three of us being really strong personalities – of getting a Ringo or something," Cam discloses. "But in the end we didn't and it's good. It's like we've known him for ages."

Mark, it transpires, is something of a ladies' man. "Jet like ladies," grins the solid 23-year-old, puffing out his chest. "I know I do – I fuckin' *am* a ladies fan. I fuckin'... I'm a *big* fan of ladies. So I think this *(points to the Jet lingerie)* is a fantastic idea!"

What about that crucial brother-to-brother dynamic between the Sesters?

"We're *not* the Gallaghers," points out Nick, downing a beer. "But it's not all rosy either."

"Y'know, I see it as an opportunity to kind of be like John Lennon," adds 21-year-old Chris through a haze of cigarette smoke. "Fuckin'... do what you want, say what you want, be who you want to be. I've said some fuckin' shitty things that have pissed a couple of people off but Nick's much more contemplative and he'll sit there and put things in perspective, whereas I'll just go BANG, man! But I've got no qualms with myself because I'm always really honest."

"Chris *is* the more passionate one," admits Nick later. "Every time we go out, he'll get drunk and someone will say something and he'll start going, 'You fuckin' wanker!' and I'll be the one going, 'Chris, let's fuckin' get out of here, it's stupid.' He'll say shit without thinking – he's been in a fight every weekend for the last three months."

All of which is not big, not clever, just the dumb blood and guts of rock'n'roll. Jet are about to make the new rock revolution look like child's play. Blind faith has delivered them to the doorstep of global domination, and there's an album being recorded right now in the US with Marilyn Manson producer Dave Sardy which is guaranteed to make you want to set the rest of your record collection on fire. Grinding out another cig, Chris spells out the only reason you'll need to join their ranks and stamp out every single half-baked poser masquerading as an über-cool rock star in 2003.

"Everything else is bullshit!" he concludes furiously. "It's too splintered – someone who goes and buys a Strokes album will go and buy a fuckin' DJ Whoever record! Rock'n'roll is better than *anything* else but not everybody understands that. Maybe it's going to take a band – y'know? I'd like it to be Jet but who fuckin' knows who it's gonna be? But it's gonna take a band that people just go, 'Fuck, these guys are too good to ignore, *this is a way of life*."

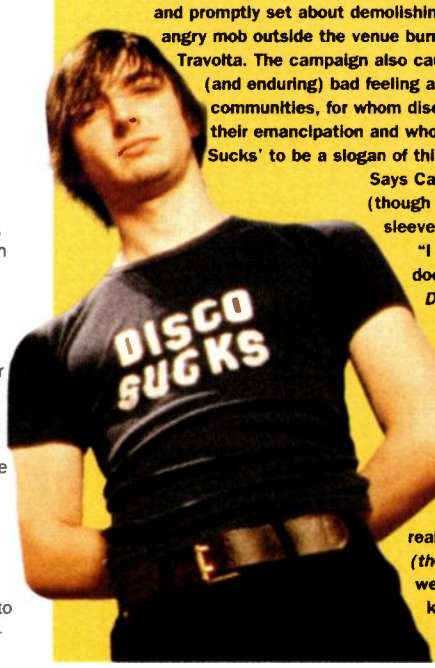
How about it? Are you in?

DISCO SUCKS!

That Jet T-shirt controversy in full

In July 1979, feeding off a growing public hatred of The Bee Gees and *Saturday Night Fever*, Chicago DJ Steve Dahl announced a Disco Demolition Night to be held at the city's Comiskey Park Stadium during a major-league match. Anyone could get in for the bargain price of 98 cents, as long as they brought along a disco record to add to a bonfire set up between games.

Unfortunately, 50,000 pissed-up punters took Dahl up on the offer and promptly set about demolishing the stadium, while an angry mob outside the venue burnt effigies of John Travolta. The campaign also caused enormous (and enduring) bad feeling among the black and gay communities, for whom disco was the music of their emancipation and who considered 'Disco Sucks' to be a slogan of thinly veiled bigotry.



Says Cam, who made the shirt (though Chris wears it on the sleeve of 'Dirty Sweet'): "I was watching this documentary *(on Disco Demolition Night)* and I just saw this little kid on his dad's shoulders with a 'Disco Sucks!' T-shirt on and I thought, 'That's a fuckin' cool T-shirt!' It's a bit of a statement against dance culture, really. We don't think *(the scene is)* very deep; we don't dig it and that's kinda what 'Rollover DJ' is about."

"Everything else is bullshit. It's too splintered... Rock'n'roll is better than anything else but not everybody understands that yet" Chris Sester

"He'll say shit without thinking – he's been in a fight every weekend for the last three months" Nick Sester on brother Chris

Preparing for take off: Jet (l-r) Cam, Chris, Nick and Mark

THE WARLOCKS

Taking drugs to make music to take drugs to

Text: Andy Capper Photography: Perouinc.com

Some people say that drugs are for losers and that bands who sing songs about drugs are stupid and irresponsible. Others believe that the only way to experience fully the highs and lows of the exciting rock'n'roll lifestyle is to take as many dangerous and illegal stimulants as you can.

Fans of The Warlocks will be in the latter camp. A seven-strong, Los Angeles-based gang of hellbound, hopelessly doomed wastrels, they make the kind of opiate-soaked blues that Spiritualized used to purvey in the days before Jason Spaceman got all orchestral and ethereal on our frazzled asses.

Formed around guitarist/bassist/singer Bobby Hecksher in 1999, the group released a handful of narcotically enhanced EPs on the Californian Bomp! label before hooking up with Warner subsidiary Birdman.

Adopting the motto 'Keep Music Evil', their early gigs were so legendary for their all-out, psychedelic, dope-enhanced mind-fuckingness (epileptic fit-inducing lights, scary drones and general freaking out) that kindred spirits Black Rebel Motorcycle Club took them on a US tour. Imagine the state of the backstage area.

While all The Warlocks' back catalogue is pretty much the best modern narcotic rock you're ever going to lay your hands on, their new 'Phoenix' album takes their dedication to substance abuse to new, deliciously dangerous levels, with song titles like 'The Dope Feels Good', 'Shake The Dope Out' and 'Hurricane Heart Attack'. With the line-up now stabilised at JC Rees (guitar), Corey Lee Grant (guitar), Jeff Levitz (guitar), Laura Grigsby (tambourine, organ and vocals), Danny Hole (drums), Bobby Martine (drums), and Bobby Hecksher (guitarist, bassist, lead vocalist), they're picking up kindred loser spirits far and wide. As an opiated-sounding Bobby told us: "Old dudes who like Hawkwind or Can come to see us sometimes. Kids who listen to college radio heard us back to back with The Datsuns and The Von Bondies."

Like serious drug abuse, the Warlocks experience isn't a particularly safe, easy ride – but that's what Coldplay are for. The Warlocks play evil, criminal music for people who want to get fucked up on drugs and listen to West Coast drug rock. And apart from having as much sex as is humanly possible, is there any better way to spend your short, pitiful life?

The Warlocks play London Camden Monarch (February 3), Cardiff Barfly (6), Southampton Joiners (9), Wolverhampton Little Civic (11), Manchester Roadhouse (12) and York Fibbers (13)

Like serious drug abuse, the Warlocks experience isn't a particularly safe, easy ride

Out of their skulls: The Warlocks (clockwise from top) Danny, Corey, Laura, Bobby H, JC, Bobby M, Jeff

THE SLEEPY JACKSON

Lush, life-affirming orchestral pop from Australia

Text Alicia Brodrick Photography Ian Gehring

The Sleepy Jackson's frontman Luke Steele is grinning like a Cheshire cat at the foot of the Taj Mahal – not the Delhi model but its namesake, the world's largest self-playing organ, housed in a museum in Sydney. "This," he gurgles, "is JOY!"

Steele thinks a lot of things "are joy". On upcoming mini-album, 'The Sleepy Jackson', he sings about wearing mini-skirts, drinking coffee in the sun and being incapacitated by a suspected collapsed lung in a dreamy voice, while his henchmen slowly strum, haphazardly bash tambourines and go *"aaah"* and *"oooh"* a lot. It's a warm, fuzzy mix of 'Loser'-period Beck, The Polyphonic Spree and The Beatles at their beardiest. That's Sleepy as in sunshine, good dope and a full stomach. Although no cannabis plants were harmed in the making of this record.

"I've never taken drugs," stresses Steele. "It's how far you want to take your mind. People go, 'Ah, extend your mind, wow!' but I've always listened to 1930s big band music and all different styles of music. I buy any kind of record, even if it's really bad Beatles songs recorded by Japanese orchestras. I've built up this library in my head, I'll take one sound and another one and marry them together. I guess it's trying to create a fantasia – stuff that incorporates everything."

Steele wasn't always so laid-back. Two years ago, he was ditched mid-tour by the third version of the band he'd nurtured since 1999. Convinced The Sleepy Jackson were finished, he spent ten months of "horror" – drinking himself into a downward spiral of depression until his brother started "ministering the gospel" to him. It saved Luke's life but he doesn't bang on about it. Well, only a bit.

"I'm not religious but at that point there was nothing else that could save me," he says. "And ever since then my life has just been harmonious. It proved there was a bigger plan for my life."

A reinvigorated Steele reformed the band 18 months ago with guitarist/vocalist Justin Burford, bassist Rod Aravena and drummer Mal Clark, whose dad used to play guitar for leopardskin-clad mentalist Screaming Lord Sutch.

"What my dad tells me about him reminds me of Luke," Mal says. "Things he did in the '60s were so ahead of his time, it freaked the fuck out of people. With Luke it's the same. You think, 'What's he gonna do next?'"

Well whatever it is, expect it to be very special indeed.

The Sleepy Jackson's debut mini-album 'The Sleepy Jackson' is out on February 24 on Virgin. They play the London Camden Monarch *NME* Bring It On Night (February 10), London WC2 Astoria *NME* Awards Show (11), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (13), Cardiff Barfly (14) and Bristol Louisiana *NME* Bring It On Night (15)

"I've built up this library in my head, I'll take sounds and marry them together. I guess it's trying to create a fantasia" Luke Steele

Snooze rock revolution: The Sleepy Jackson (clockwise from left) Justin, Luke, Rod and Mal

The dark is rising: AFI (l-r) Jade, Adam, Hunter and (below) Davey

AFI

From skate-punk nutters to doom-rock outriders

Text: Dele Fadele Photography: Sebastian Artz

AFI (A Fire Inside), the well-drilled unit that consists of Davey Havok, Adam Carson, Jade Puget and Hunter, aren't so much a new group as a rejuvenated one.

From their early-'90s genesis as 15-year-old skate punks immersed in small-town Bay Area California hardcore scenes, AFI have mutated and evolved. Early songs included 'I Wanna Get A Mohawk (But Mom Won't Let Me Get One)' and one about cereals. The intervening years saw singer Havok reviled for his heavy make-up and self-confessed "piercing and whiny" voice. But the rank outsiders of yesteryear have become fast-lane contenders for 2003 with a passionate following – check out the fan tattoos at *www.afireinside.net/features/tattoo*. Their forthcoming *NME* Awards Show was the first in the line-up of London Astoria gigs to sell out.

Now signed to Stephen Spielberg and David Geffen's DreamWorks, they're currently tweaking the upcoming 'Sing The Sorrow' LP, produced by Jerry Finn (Jawbreaker, Rancid, Green Day) and Butch Vig (Smashing Pumpkins, Nirvana, Sonic Youth).

"It's more an inward look and self-analysis than the socio-political lyrics on our other records," says Davey. "We are a dark band. My words tend to focus on the darker side of life, rather than light, because that's something that should be acknowledged."

AFI's phenomenal strengths lie in aggression, performance, and their capacity to inspire intense reactions. But if the echo-laden vocals, industrial breakdowns and lyrics like *"Whoa, we dance in misery"* on last album 'The Art Of Drowning' led you to label them goths, don't.

"If you want to call *me* a goth," the mascara-smeared Davey continues, "that's fine, I don't care. But anyone that's heard our music, to describe it as gothic would be completely wrong. If you can describe music as gothic, we ain't it."

AFI play Sheffield NMB on February 4 and an *NME* Awards Show with Face Tomorrow and Kinesis at the London WC2 Astoria on February 7

"My words tend to focus on the darker side of life because it's something that should be acknowledged" Davey Havok

CLIPSE

The Justin Timberlake-corruptin' hustlers of hip-hop

Text: Imran Ahmed
Photography: Hamish Brown

The Beatles, The Stones, The Libertines... every good band in your record collection has been musically indebted to illegal stimulants. And Virginia-based drug dealers turned hip-hop duo Clipse, aka brothers in rhyme Gene 'Malice' and Terrence 'Pusha T' Thornton, have taken the drug album a step further on their debut LP 'Lord Willin''.

Whether it's about dealing drugs (the abstract no-frills anthem 'Grindin''), likening drugs to women (the brilliant '70s soul sound of 'Gangsta Lean') or finding drugs while playing hide-and-seek ('Young Boy', a tale of the omnipresence of crack in their childhood, set to a tune that sounds like Beyoncé's 'Work It Out') – 'Lord Willin'' is packed with and inspired by non-stop highs.

Signed to Star Trak Records, the imprint of their best mates and album producers The Neptunes (whom Clipse have known for over a decade), it's topped and tailed by earthquaking beats. The partnership has proved hugely potent in America, where 'Grindin'' stormed airplay charts and became the hottest underground hip-hop track of 2002. Their debut UK single 'When The Last Time' seems destined to repeat the same trick over here. Amid all the excitement, *NME* caught up with them in New York.

***NME*: How's life in Clipse?**
Pusha T: "It's good in the US. We're just trying to get it popping where you at..."

You both rapped on Justin Timberlake's 'Like I Love You' and it was reported recently that Justin once smoked a blunt with Nelly. Did he smoke the chronic with you?
Pusha T: "*(Indignantly)* Who cares?! *(Shouting)* HE SMOKED A BLUNT! THAT'S ALL! I only smoke with women. I try to get them high and sleep with them."

What's Virginia like?
Listening to 'Lord Willin'', it sounds like a difficult place to grow up...
Malice: "Virginia's the best, man. We made a few bad choices, y'know... we left our neighbourhood and went to the other side of the tracks."

Is that where you sold drugs? From what we've read...
Malice: "*(Sceptically)* From what you've read? We definitely talk about... hustling and grindin'... hugging the block, illegal means, you know what I'm saying – selling dope. I just don't wanna incriminate myself."

But the experiences you talk about on 'Lord Willin'' are first-hand?
Malice: "Definitely."

What's it like being in a group with your brother?
Malice: "It's the best."

So you don't fight all the time. Like, say, the Gallaghers?
Malice: "I heard about that! I saw a documentary on VH1 about Noel Gallagher – is that his name? Is he the drunk? HURGHAHA! No, Liam! Liam is the drunk! HURGHAHA! Yeaaah! They make hot music, though."

You think so? Is there any other rock music you like?
Pusha T: "I'm feeling The White Stripes. They're dope. Do you remember this group – I think they broke up – called At The Drive-In? ATD-I was crazy. I like The Strokes too. They're the shit."

What's next for Clipse?
Malice: "Tonight we're playing New York with MOP..."

Will you hang out afterwards?
Malice: "No we'll do our show and it'll be a wrap."

No aftershow invite, then?
Malice: "I can't see them not inviting Clipse to the party. We are what's happening right now!"

Clipse release 'When The Last Time' on February 3. Their debut LP, 'Lord Willin'', is out on February 17

Willin' and able: Clipse (l-r) Pusha T and Malice

"I'm feeling The White Stripes. They're dope. I like The Strokes too. They're the shit" Pusha

THE BASEMENT

Irish/Scouse dream team where Bob Dylan meets George Best? Bargain!

Text: Paul McNamee Photography: Ellis Parinder

Of all the bands named after levels of buildings (Penthouse, 13th Floor Elevators...), The Basement are the only one you need in 2003.

Three parts Irish and one part Scouse, they look like young George Bests, sing like Bob Dylan circa-2003 but, crucially, *play* like Dylan circa-1965. So that's jangly guitars, gravelly voices, world-weariness, dark good looks and dazzling ball control to look forward to when debut single, 'Medicine Day', is released in February. It's had heavy rotation on the *NME* stereo and backs up the buzz that's been around them since their first dates supporting The Thrills.

"It's great people are talking," says frontman and songwriter John Mullin, "but it'd be just as fine if they said we were shit."

The Basement, then. They're shit. You'll love them.

The Basement play Bristol Louisiana (January 20), Southampton Joiners (21), Belfast Limelight (24), and support The Coral at Dublin Ambassador Theatre (Feb 2), Belfast Limelight (3), Glasgow Barrowlands (5), Aberdeen Music Hall (6), Middlesbrough Town Hall (7), Manchester Academy (8), Portsmouth Pyramids (10), London WC2 Astoria *NME* Awards Show (11), Cardiff University (12), Norwich UEA (14) and Oxford Brookes University (15)

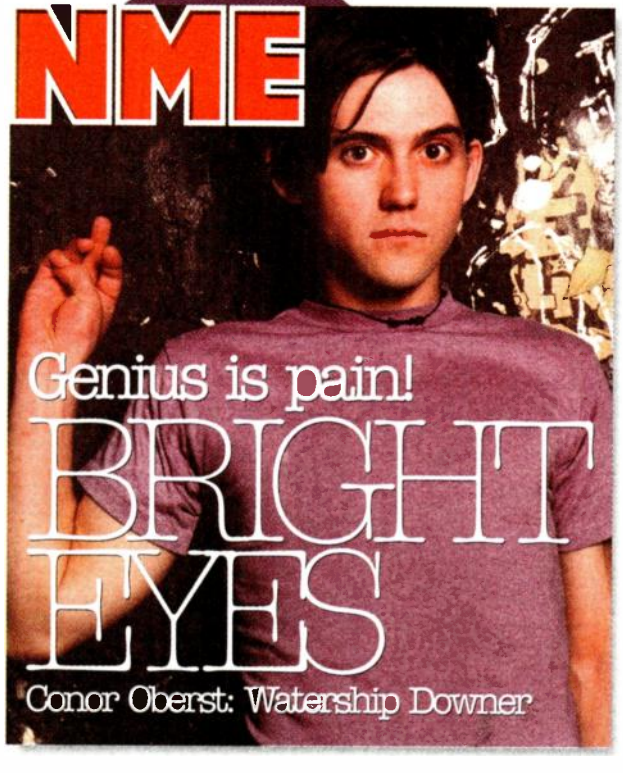
"It's great people are talking, but it'd be just as fine if they said we were shit" John Mullin

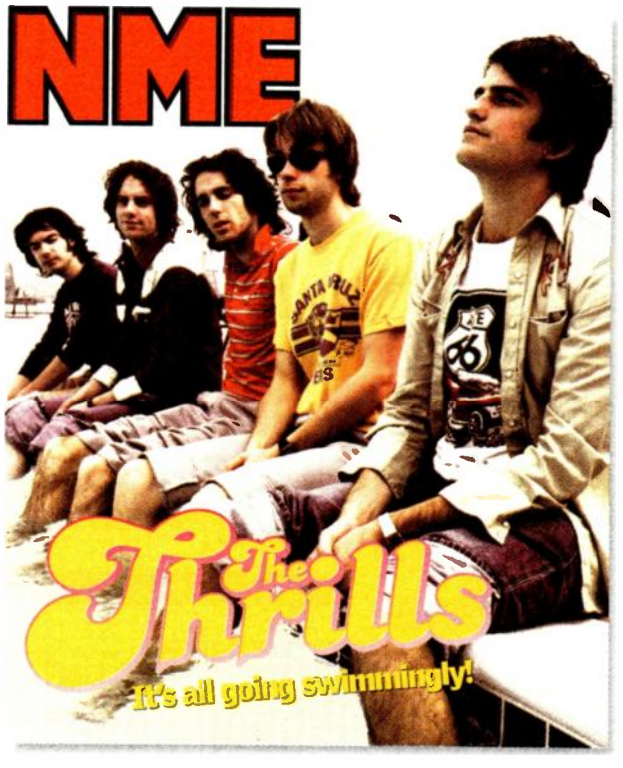
The Basement japes (there'll be plenty, we promise): Mark, Declan, Graeme and John

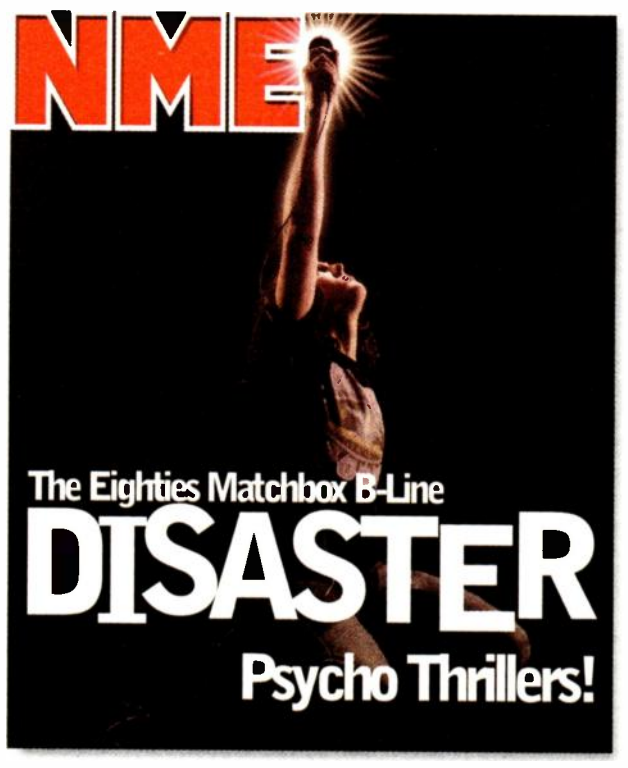
FRONT PAGE VIEWS!

Who the stars would most like to see gracing NME's cover in 2003

Text: James Jam/Imran Ahmed/Mark Beaumont







CHRIS MARTIN, COLDPLAY

"I really love Sigur Rós. If they're not massive within a year then there's no justice."

JACK WHITE, THE WHITE STRIPES

"I'd love to see The Whirlwind Heat on the cover of *NME*. I think that they are the closest thing to Devo that this generation is going to get. They have an amazing live show and are very humble and talented boys. A breath of fresh air from all of the cocky, know-it-all rockers in the world."

ROBERT TURNER, BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

"We'd like to see The Warlocks and Ty Cobb on the cover next year. The Warlocks do this fantastic Spacemen 3 space drone thing with great tunes and Ty Cobb are just the best band out of New York since forever."

CASEY CHAOS, AMEN

"I would have to pick Guy McKnight from The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster. He's pure, real and in one of the best bands in the world today. Guy should be knighted! Knight McKnight!!! Knight McKnight!!!!! This is a band of legends, they are the pillars of your society. What they do is more important than the Queen and all of her vibrators combined."

TIM DELAUGHTER, THE POLYPHONIC SPREE

"I think *NME* should put my friend and mentor Walter P Duncandash on the cover. He is the creator of false reality and life-size egos. His fashion sense is unparalleled and his dance moves have brought peace in times of war. A clear-cut choice for me!"

DAN FISHER, THE COOPER TEMPLE CLAUSE

"I'd like to see The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster on the cover of *NME* this time next year. Either them or Conor Oberst. Total genius. The new Bright Eyes album is my favourite of the year and one that I've gotten into time after time. Oh, and I'd like to see David Attenborough on the cover, too. He's brilliant. *The Life Of Mammals* was amazing!"

JIMMY CHRISTMAS, THE D4

"Who did I enjoy in 2002? The (International) Noise Conspiracy, The Fuhrers, The Hives, The Parkinsons, and The 45s. I'd like to see The Buff Medways on the cover of *NME* in 2003, though."

JAMES SKELLY, THE CORAL

"Who would I like to see on the cover of *NME* this year? The Basement, The Zutons, The Bees... I really liked them this year and they deserve to do well in 2003. Would I like to see more bands from Liverpool on the cover? Only if they deserve it, only if they've got the tunes."

EBBOT LUNDBERG, THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES

"Next year I'd like to see The Soundtrack Of Our Lives on the cover of *NME* every week talking about the songwriting process, tour managers and how wonderful it is to be on the road. I also look forward to the surrender of the USA as well as hearing if Arthur Lee has something to tell us on his forthcoming album."

ROBERT HARVEY, THE MUSIC

"I think Nylon Pylon should be on the cover of *NME* in 2003. They're from Manchester and they're just a wicked band!"

NICHOLAUS ARSON, THE HIVES

"What bands would I like to see on the cover of *NME*? The Reigning Sound, The Hellacopters, Hanoi Rocks (the new record is ace) and The Tearjerkers. I also heard that The Rapture were good in Iceland. Missed their show, but they might be in there."

RODDY WOOMBLE, IDLEWILD

"My tip for 2003 is Bright Eyes. He released a record last year, I think it's one of these records that takes a long time for people to absorb. I think there's a stroke of genius in the songwriting."

TIM WESTWOOD, RADIO 1

"My tip for 2003 is an artist by the name of 50 Cent. 50 Cent is out of the G-Unit – that's his crew. Now 50 Cent, he represents the truth; that's what he's about. He's real grimy, keeps it mad real and there's a lot of heat around his name; y'know, he's real big on the street."

KAREN O, YEAH YEAH YEAHS

"We love Liars. It feels right to be on tour with them. I think it's the most exciting bill ever. If I was a teenager, I'd be on cloud nine. It's a real high-energy, raucous show. If we go first we try to make them step up to us. And if they go first, we have to rise to the occasion because they're so good. We're constantly trying to outdo each other, so that makes it a really fun and crazy show."

WAYNE COYNE, THE FLAMING LIPS

"There's this guy, Har Mar Superstar, who'd make a great cover because he'd do something ridiculous. I don't think the *NME* cover always has to be worthy musically, it just has to make you stop and say, 'Oh my god!'"

PETE DOHERTY, THE LIBERTINES

"If there's one band I'd love to see on the cover of *NME*, it's this band called Lefthand. They're unbelievable! All they need is a bloody record deal!"

MORRISSEY

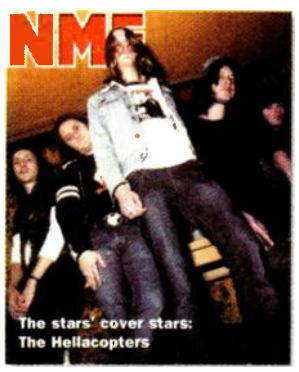
"I was handed *(The Thrills')* demo by the singer from Sack and I thought, 'Oh, here we go again.' But then, 'Here we *don't* go again.' It was something different. It had this lazy vocal, it reminded me a little of Canned Heat, which is a very good thing."

THE STREETS

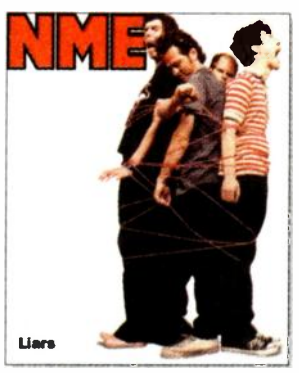
"Dizzy Rascal. He's only 17 and a member of *(London's)* Roll Deep Crew. I think if there's a future of garage it's him."

"They're unbelievable. All they need is a bloody record deal!" Pete Doherty on Lefthand

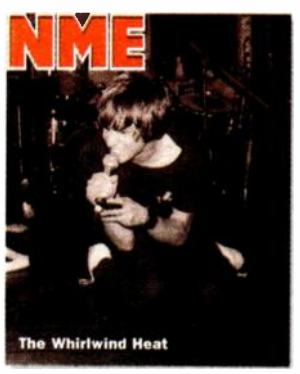
"They are pillars of your society. What they do is more important than the Queen and all of her vibrators combined" Casey Chaos on The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster



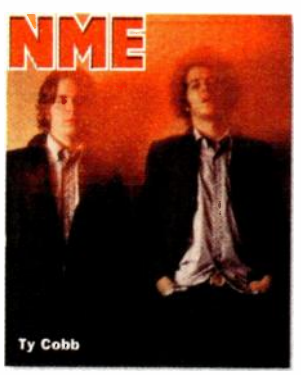
The stars' cover stars: The Hellacopters



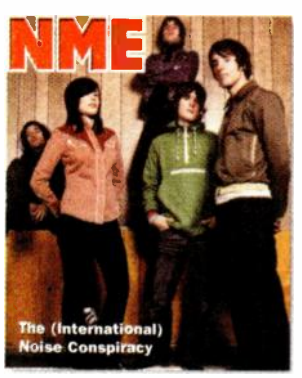
Liars



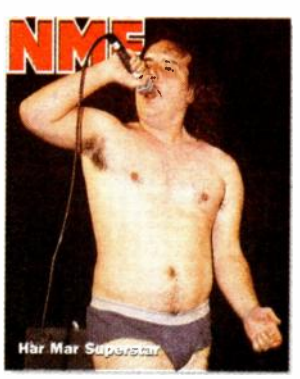
The Whirlwind Heat



Ty Cobb



The (International) Noise Conspiracy



Har Mar Superstar

IDLEWILD AND WESTWOOD INTERVIEWS COURTESY OF RADIO 1. PHOTOGRAPHY: CARA BLOCH/ANDY WILLSHER/ELLIS PARRINDER/SIMON CLEMENGER/SAM JONES/JO MCCAUGHEY/JENNY LEWIS/RICHARD SKIDMORE

THE NME HOT LIST 2003

365 DAYS LATER

How NME's class of 2002 fared on the notoriously rickety rollercoaster of rock

Text: Imran Ahmed

BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

THIS TIME LAST YEAR BRMC had yet to release a record, yet we were so intrigued we put them on the cover.

WHAT *NME* SAID "If The Strokes and the Stripes were largely responsible for rock's renaissance in 2001, there's little doubt that BRMC are continuing where they left off."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT BRMC hit the road running on last year's *NME* Carling Awards Tour and didn't look back. They picked up celebrity fans from Noel Gallagher to Kelly Osbourne, made scuzzed-out, politicised revolution rock cool and, in the shape of Nick Jago, gave us a glimpse of God's cheekbones.

THE STREETS

THIS TIME LAST YEAR Although two-step turk Mike Skinner had released a single – 2001's 'Has It Come To This' – The Streets remained a secret location to most.

WHAT *NME* SAID "His debut album will be a landmark."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT 'Original Pirate Material' sold by the bucketful, saw The Streets compared to Eminem and staked a claim for Mike as the voice of a mashed-up generation. Was nominated for Mobos and the Mercury Prize. Now tipped to pip Robbie Williams at the Brits.

THE VINES

THIS TIME LAST YEAR Unknown Aussies The Vines were recording their debut LP, 'Highly Evolved', in LA.

WHAT *NME* SAID "They'll be the most exciting new band on the planet in 2002. The album should do for the upcoming year what 'Is This It' did for the last."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Mayhem. The singles became anthems, the album 'Highly Evolved' was a worldwide smash (Number Three here, Number 11 in the States) and Craig Nicholls' erratic behaviour – and amazing talent – saw him lauded as the ultimate rock star, as well as placed on semi-suicide watch by a voyeuristic mainstream media. 2002 ended with Craig brawling onstage with bassist Patrick Mathews, leaving their future hanging by a thread. Follow *that*!

THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES

THIS TIME LAST YEAR The Swedish sextet were on the verge of shaking off their underachiever tag with the release of 'Behind The Music'.

WHAT *NME* SAID "TSOOL sound *and* look like all rock'n'roll history's successes, mistakes, histories and victories rolled into one."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Noel Gallagher insisted that the Swedes support Oasis across the world, even turning up backstage at Reading just to see them. Their first-on-the-bill festival appearances were the only reason anyone got out of their tents before midday last summer. And they've just been nominated for a Grammy Award!

FISCHERSPOONER

THIS TIME LAST YEAR Electroclash was set to conquer the world. The 'Spooner were riding shotgun.

WHAT *NME* SAID "The best thing to happen to music since electricity."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Casey Spooner phoned *NME* to demand, "Whose cock do I have to suck to get on the cover?" They signed a £1million deal with Ministry Of Sound, then took half the company down with them when their album '#1' bombed and anthemic single, 'Emerge', reached a none-too-impressive Number 25. A disaster, then, but a glorious one.

GOLD CHAINS

THIS TIME LAST YEAR Gold Chains, aka 29-year-old artisan Topher Lafata, was the future of weird-hop.

WHAT *NME* SAID "About as exciting, bewildering and entertaining as music gets."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Not a lot. Gold Chains was last seen pawning his jewellery at a Mr T lookalike convention in Dulwich (well, playing London's Camden Monarch).

THE CORAL

THIS TIME LAST YEAR The Coral were a little-known sextet from suburban Liverpool, doing a bewildering line in psychedelic pop.

WHAT *NME* SAID "The nation's newest, and foremost, spook-rock art-pop visionaries."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Ripping up the opening slot on the *NME* Carling Awards Tour at the start of last year, The Coral crashlanded into the rest of Britain's musical consciousness with their stonking mid-afternoon set at Glastonbury. Debut album 'The Coral' followed to universal acclaim, with reviews comparing their sound to everything from sea shanties to psychedelic blues lunatic Captain Beefheart. 'Dreaming Of You' tempered their prodigious genius into just over two minutes and hit the Top 20. Their fantastic voyage continues...

THE PARKINSONS

THIS TIME LAST YEAR Infamous rather than famous London-based Portuguese punk four-piece – due to a regular tendency to get starkers.

WHAT *NME* SAID "Chaos, disarray and snotty, primal rock'n'roll."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Although mini-LP 'A Long Way To Nowhere' received only a muted response, 2002's We Love This Fucking Tour Tour, with The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster and Ikara Colt, was a seismic moment in the new rock revolution.

BRITISH SEA POWER

THIS TIME LAST YEAR British Sea Power were set to bring back a sense of old-fashioned English eccentricity to indie. And make military jackets cool.

WHAT *NME* SAID "Brilliant and brutal."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT The Libertines did the above in a far sharper way. BSP sunk to the bottom of the indie ocean with a few uneventful singles on Rough Trade. Have yet to release their debut LP.

MS DYNAMITE

THIS TIME LAST YEAR: North Londoner Ms Dynamite was a highly-regarded garage MC, known principally for her stinging vocal on Sticky's 2001 single 'Booo!'.

WHAT *NME* SAID "A fusion of vigorous dancehall, spindly ragga, creamy soul and pop, Ms Dynamite is set to explode in 2002."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT Debut LP 'A Little Deeper' bagged the Mercury Music Prize, three Mobos and spawned two Top Ten hits, 'It Takes More' and 'Dy-Na-Mi-Tee'. In a move that'd delight Guy Fawkes, Dynamite recently declared that she'd like to "blow up" Westminster by running for Parliament. "You might see Ms Dynamite as a politician soon," she claimed on BBC2's *Newsnight*.

GET YOUR CLICKS HERE!

CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR THE KILLS? ALREADY OBSESSED WITH JET? INTRIGUED BY AFI? DON'T SIT IN SUSPENSE - GO TO *NME.COM*, WHERE OUR SPECIAL HOT LIST 2003 MICROSITE WILL GIVE YOU THE MUSIC, THE VIDEOS, AND THE BOARDS WHERE YOU CAN SLAVER PUBLICLY IN ANTICIPATION. GO TO IT!

FAINT PRAISE

NEBRASKA'S UNLIKELIEST ELECTRO-ROCKERS ARE IN A FIELD OF THEIR OWN

THE FAINT
Danse Macabre
(CITY SLANG)

When the plague swept through Europe in the 17th century, artists frequently depicted the 'danse macabre', a group of skeletons playing instruments or dancing in a ring. Fast-forward four centuries, and The Faint – recently called, hilariously, "Nebraska's answer to *('80s synth team)* Heaven 17" – disinter the image for their album title. Not only that, the album (their third) has songs called 'Let The Poison Spill From Your Throat', 'Ballad Of A Paralysed Citizen' and, fantastically, 'Posed To Death'. Having covered sex fairly exhaustively on previous record 'Blank Wave Arcade' (sample titles: 'Worked Up So Sexual', 'Sex Is Personal', 'Casual Sex'), The Faint are now doing death. Imagine a depressed Fischerspooner and you're in the changing room of the right ballpark.

Except The Faint are a proper band. With guitars and that. As their *NME* feature said last week, they sit precisely midway between electroclash and the new rock revolution. Their tunes, adorned with Duran Duran-sized choruses, are as gripping and remorseless as a car-crusher.

Their overt '80s-ness might put off the timid – they dress entirely in black and use weird I-Am-A-Dalek microphones when the moment demands. However, with ultra-hooky songs like 'Your Retro Career Melted', The Faint are – *à la* Gary Numan – just a Sugababe rejig away from chart success.

Despite being recorded on an indie shoestring, the whole thing is sonically enormous. No-one now makes synthesizers rock harder – the blasting riff on 'Glass Danse World' could flatten a small city.

As electroclash and the new rock revolution mutate to survive the new rigours of 2003, it's North America that's piecing together the clues of the past in order to point to the future. Sign up for the resurrection shuffle.

Alex Needham **8**

STAKKER
Eurotechno: Original Soundtrack (REPHLEX)

Experimental acid classic bleeps again

Way back in 1989, two Cornish schoolkids named Richard D James and Grant Wilson-Claridge stumbled upon a Rave New World. Their epiphany was *Eurotechno*, a mind-bending multimedia short that captured the tribal rush of the acid revolution. Fourteen years later, and those kids are re-releasing the score – "a visionary classic", says they – on the label it's so clearly inspired.

The music – written by Brian Dougans, who went on to form half of Future Sound Of London – must, at the time, have sounded like an apocalypse wrought on peace, love and unity vibes: coming on like the metallic minimalism of The Normal's 'Warm Leatherette' welded to the spidery squelch of Phuture's 'Acid Trax', 'Eurotechno' is 25 minutes of fascinating electronic terror.

Louis Pattison **8**

KULA SHAKER
Kollected: The Best Of
(COLUMBIA)

Best-forgotten hippy-rock goons

One of them had scary eyes; another was millionaire dipshit Crispian Mills, a man whose talent for the sensible soundbite made Liam Gallagher sound like Oscar Wilde. They were Kula Shaker – imagine Toploader with a sitar – and to prove it was more than a nightmare, here's the greatest hits, no doubt timed to tie in with Christmas in whichever universe Mills currently dwells.

The songs have dated so badly that a compilation that would have been difficult to justify at the tail-end of their mundane chart career crosses over into total irrelevance in 2003. 'Mystical Machine Gun', 'Govinda': they're all here, akin to a local theatre's attempt at *Lord Of The Rings: The Musical*. And like all pompous attempts to make important music, Kula Shaker's back catalogue means precisely nothing.

Peter Robinson **1**

DRIVE LIKE JEHU REISSUE
Yank Crime (SWAMI)

Influential post-hardcore with Rocket From The Crypt man

Originally released in 1994 and now expanded/remastered with three extra tracks, San Diegans Drive Like Jehu's second and final album is the kind of record that's talked about in hushed tones by over-earnest post-hardcore fans everywhere.

Featuring John 'Speedo' Reis – moonlighting from trumpet-powered greasers Rocket From The Crypt – and a skipload of hard-edged, choppy guitar mangling, 'Yank Crime' specialises in angsty intensity. From muscular opener 'Here Come The Rome Plows' to the brooding, soundscapey 'Sinews', this album is more than deserving of reappraisal. In fact, it's so good that everyone from Mogwai to your favourite teary emo bands brazenly pillaged chunks wholesale. This is the motherlode.

Pat Long **9**

THE SEA AND CAKE
One Bedroom
(THRILL JOCKEY)

Smart, lush but lukewarm pop

The Sea And Cake are, for their sins, one of the mainstays of Chicago post-rock: four men, including Tortoise's John McEntire, who busy themselves with endless albums of jazzy twiddling for the benefit of a never-changing audience. That said, their sixth LP departs the template somewhat. The vintage synths and, hmm, *musicianship* is transferred into four-minute bursts of urbane melody; post-post-rock, if you like.

Strangely British in feel (it rounds off with a cover of Bowie's 'Sound & Vision'), it's just over halfway to being a great record. Although powered by gloopy analogue tones and snapping drums, any emotional core is hard to locate. A successful attempt to make a bright, uncomplicated guitar pop album; personal triumph doesn't always carry over to the record-buying public.

Noel Gardner **6**

CALLA
Televise
(RYKODISC)

1ST NME REVIEW

Cave-influenced NY melodrama

Calla are the sound that remains after ...Trail Of Dead have dropped to their knees, broken men. Raised in Texas but formed in Brooklyn, theirs is a world of haunted dancehalls and deserted desert plains, of tortured love songs dedicated to the ghosts of murdered lovers. Gloriously melodramatic, they make feeling misunderstood in low lighting seem like the noble cause it's clearly always been.

At times, Calla could be America's answer to 'The Bends'-era Radiohead. At others, their rich melancholia is pitched at a far more intimate level. 'Don't Hold Your Breath' is spookily compelling, and the atmospheric country-space-rock of 'Pete The Killer' feels like regret in slow motion. When the garage-rock party is over, Calla will be waiting for you.

Ian Watson **8**

THE MOUNTAIN GOATS
Tallahassee (4AD)

Pared-down concept pop

California's chief Mountain Goat, John Darnielle, has been writing about his 'alpha couple' – two drunken, bookish marrieds "permanently on the cusp of divorce" – over 11 albums now. This debut for indie fairweather 4AD takes the pair to a murderous *denouement* in a crumbling house in the Florida city, soaked in gin and dreamy alt.country vignettes.

The Goats' charm is to meld Magnetic Fields-style melancholy with the gawky melodics of Weezer. 'No Children' spits missives like, *"I hope I lie and tell everyone you were a good wife and I hope you die, I hope we both die"* in a twangish country fable, while the likes of 'First Few Desperate Hours' uncover more potent depths. Like the best bad marriages, 'Tallahassee' is long, hard going, but with a magic that pulls you back for more.

Dan Martin **7**

PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMON CLEMENGER/JO PLUMMER

SINGLE OF THE WEEK

JAY-Z
'03 Bonny And Clyde (ROC-A-FELLA)

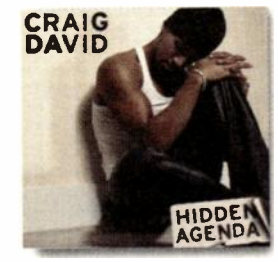
If his 'Blueprint' album was an exclusive party, Jay-Z's 'Blueprint 2' was more of a free-for-all. On it, he's to be found duetting with rockers, rappers, producers, religious leaders, medieval explorers, etc, so the fact that he's now doing a turn with the missus should come as no surprise. Here Jigga and Beyoncé spin a tale of domestic bliss. It's not all drives in the Lexus and sipping Cris, the couple seem to be saying, as here we find them watching *Home Front In The Garden* in their jogging bottoms. A similarly relaxed production makes for a behind-the-diamanté-net-curtains classic, a bit like if *The Royle Family* had been set in a particularly bling penthouse in Manhattan. ***(JR)***

JJ72
Always & Forever (LAKOTA)

STOP PRESS: Career Rejuvenated By Major Mid-Air Collision. Rock authorities were stunned yesterday when, 40 seconds into JJ72's latest single, Mark Greaney's voice – on a routine acrobatic display at 30,000 feet – collided with "a fucking top chorus". Survivors claim the collision was preceded by a "stomping military-pop groove", while art terrorist experts called it "the most spectacular event in JJ72 since Hilary was last varnished." Greaney's condition last night was described as "smug". ***(MB)***

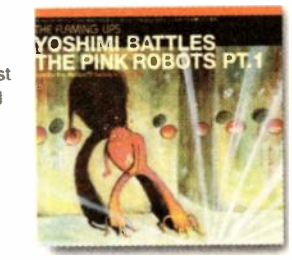
CRAIG DAVID
Hidden Agenda (WILDSTAR)

The mind boggles. What, exactly, could be Craig David's hidden agenda? The complete overthrow of the Judaeo-Christian patriarchal mindset? Converting his millions of fans to the Church of Satan through mind-control messages encrypted in his ridiculous falsetto yodel? Or just bashing out some frothy Hispanic shuffling and getting played in TopShop? Tell us Craig. The reality, as expected, is far less interesting: *"What you see with me is what you get/Got no hidden agenda"*, he wibbles. Gah. What a let-down. ***(PL)***



THE FLAMING LIPS
Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots (Pt 1)
(WARNER BROS)

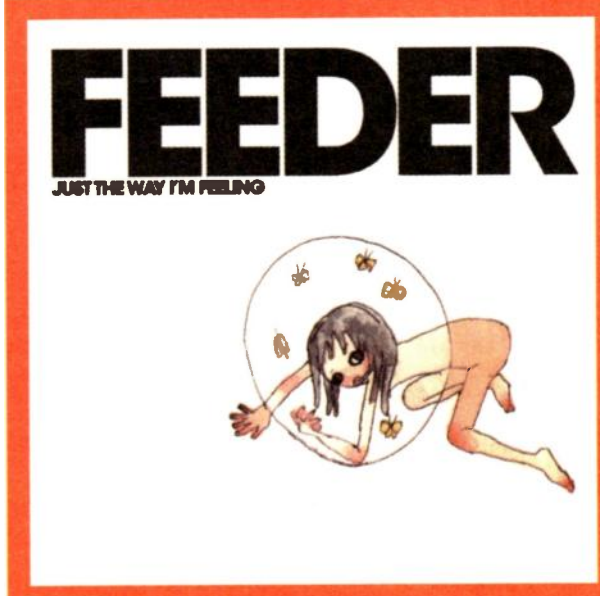
More magic from the beautifully grizzled Lips, here with yet more sci-fidelic tales of Japanese girls battling pink robots in tangerine skies. *"Working for the city/She has to discipline her body"*, croons Wayne, a man who could undergo an epiphany while on the hard shoulder of the A570 to Skelmersdale. As holders of the UK record for the longest period without a bad review, the time to dismiss their arty adult-pop as self-absorbed whimsy is surely nigh. But not yet. A beauty. ***(PM)***



HELL IS FOR HEROES
You Drove Me To It (CHRYSALIS)

Nu-metal dead? Tell that to Fred Durst's postman. But despite sharing stages with Papa Roach and Alien Ant Farm, youthful post-hardcore noiseniks The Hells (as they should now be termed) have their eyes on far greater glories. An apprenticeship spent in Symposium has clearly been put to good use. *"You're falling down one thousand feet!"* roars Justin Schlosberg over backfiring guitars, before making the sound you'd imagine Ozzy would make if someone tried to amputate his nipples without anaesthetic. Shaaaa-ron! ***(PM)***

VIRGIN LOVES



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PAUL OAKENFOLD
The Harder They Come (PERFECTO)

Not a cover of the Jimmy Cliff classic, but a surprisingly downbeat follow-up to sun-kissed smash 'Starry Eyed Surprise' featuring vocals from a stereotypically 'menacing' Tricky and 16-year-old unknown Keisha White. And it's a right old plodder, sounding like a watered-down version of something off the Tricky's 'Maxinquaye' LP, so it'll be mass suicide rather than murder on the dancefloors. Never mind, a live version of '...Surprise' appears as one of the bonus tracks. Just as well really. ***(AW)***

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION
Fortress Europe (VIRGIN)

PAAAARR-TEEE! Just when you thought the new rock revolution had finally made it safe for rock'n'roll to start getting back to its brainless best, along come ADF to remind us there's some nasty people out there. 'Fortress Europe' froths spiritedly about displaced nationals in Central Europe, which, let's face it, is more than Gareth Gates does. However, admirably righteous as it is, ADF still feel like being told off for not doing your homework when all you really wanna do is go play air guitar round Dolf De Datsun's place. ***(PM)***

WIRED FOR MONO
Travel In Turns (BIG BROTHEL)

1ST NME REVIEW

Is every member of the Swedish population between the age of 18 and 30 in a band? Maybe their government has got some kind of secret rock national service conscription programme going on. Benefiting from this bold initiative are newcomers Wired For Mono, a Stockholm quartet formed early last year whose debut single is a corker. Riding a slinky, harmonica-assisted Stones groove, WFM also have a nifty way with a country-rock melody that marks them down as serious contenders. ***(PL)***

AUDIOSLAVE
Cochise (EPIC)

Their genesis is by now widely known – three quarters RATM, one quarter Soundgarden, five quarters riff-tastic, blow-dried rock excess equals a post-millennium Spinal Tap with a marketing budget bigger than China. First came the album – overblown, piss-poor – and now, finally, a single worthy of the hype. It's fierce and furious, it sounds like Led Zep and Humble Pie. It's all about the last Red Indian chief to die, bloodied but uncaptured by the white man, and treads the thin line between great rock and self-parody. Marvellous. ***(PMcN)***

SOFT CELL
The Night (COOKING VINYL)

A return to familiar territory for the Fischerspooner of the 1980s as Soft Cell seek to find love, as they did with 'Tainted Love', in a relationship with a northern soul classic. A fair effort, certainly, but in the intervening years the band's slightly menacing bedsit electro has evidently received a painful chest wax and been polished into a rather bland disco. Interestingly, this makes them sound a bit like Pulp, but for their audience of superannuated fetishists, you've got to wonder if that will quite suffice. ***(JR)***

LEMON JELLY
Nice Weather For Ducks (XL RECORDINGS)

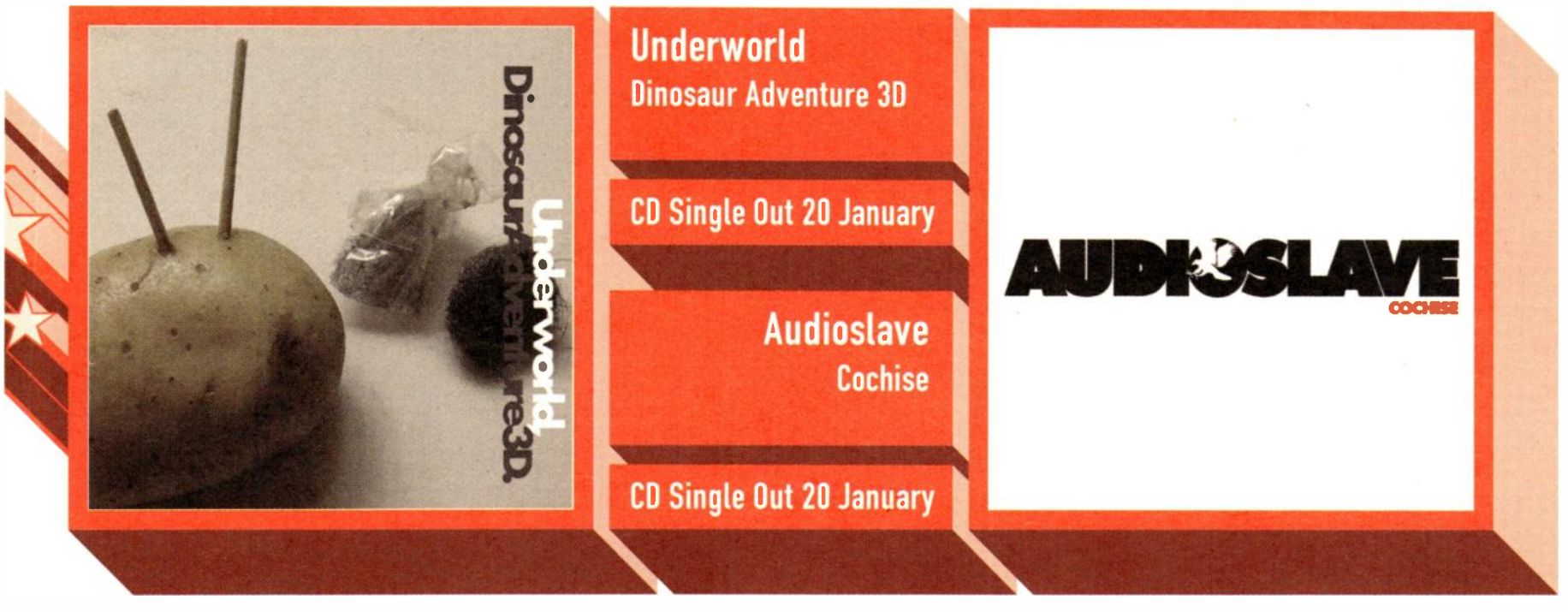
Yeeeuuuch! The aural equivalent of a pilled-up Norman Cook giving you a bear hug at a foam party, Lemon Jelly are the only group on the planet who succeed in making Groove Armada look macho. Non-music lovers everywhere will love 'Nice Weather For Ducks' on account of its 'ironic' sample and the fact that you could play it at full volume for a week and no-one would be bothered enough to ask who it was. Its parent album will sell millions. Be warned: these are clearly dangerous men. ***(PM)***

JOHNNY MARR AND THE HEALERS
Bangin' On (IMUSIC)

He's back! The John Squire it's alright to like returns, eager to set the record straight again about who the talented one was in The Smiths (ask grandad). What with the lukewarm reception recently afforded the Bard of Gloucestershire, Richard Ashcroft, the chances of the Rock Dow Jones being affected by this record seems remote. Alas, even when you close your eyes and tell yourself this is a living, breathing guitar god at full tilt, 'Bangin' On' *still* sounds like The Shining fronted by Bono trying to 'do' sleazy. Sorry. ***(PM)***

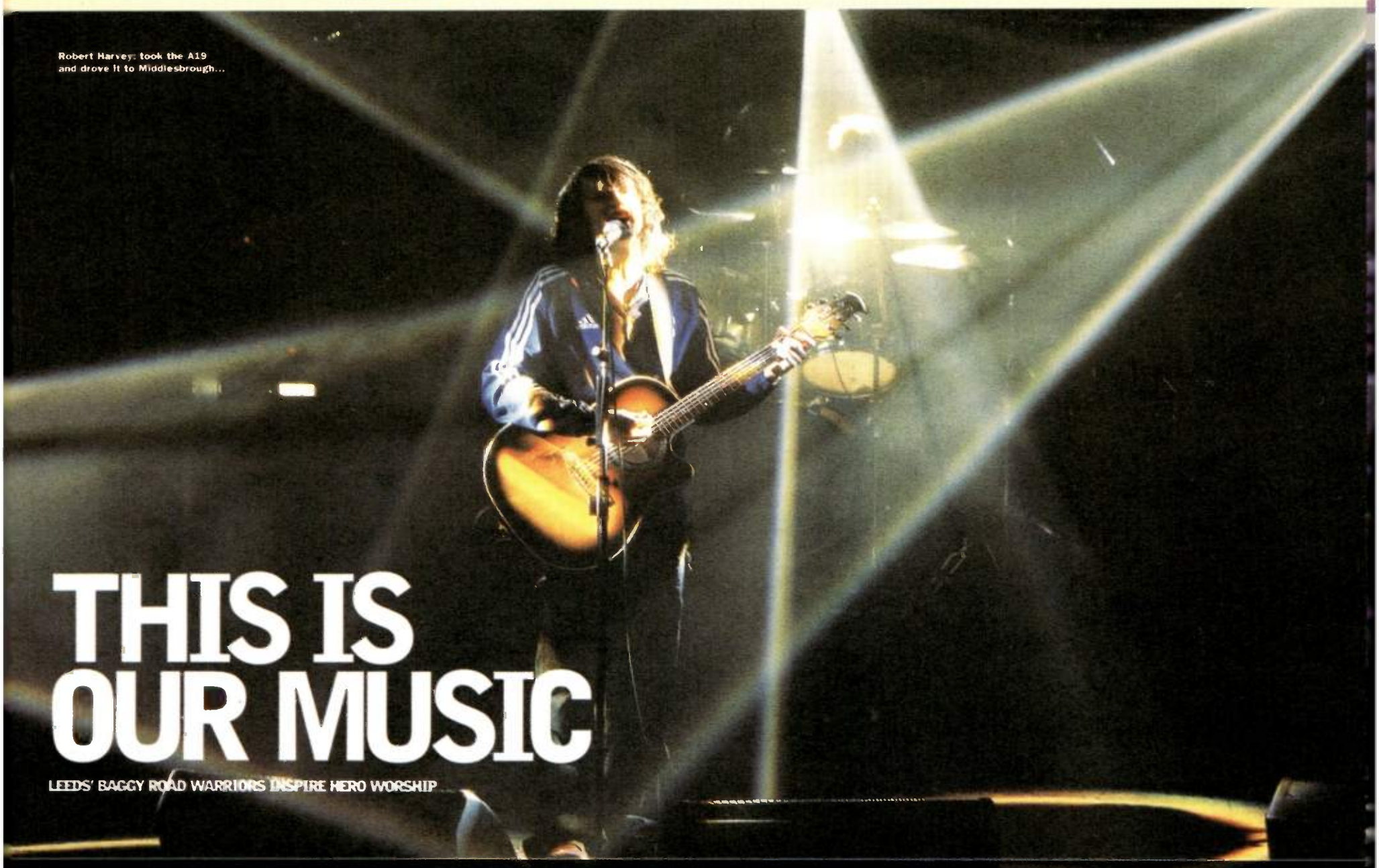
TIGA
Man Hrdina (K7)

Tiga you undoubtedly know already thanks to the inescapable sound of 'Sunglasses At Night', the record with which he and Zyntherius announced themselves to be wielding a rubber truncheon at the head of electroclash's mildly ironic raiding party. Here he departs from that formula into hard and slightly dull spooky electro-house, but a cover of Nelly's 'Hot In Herre' shows that even if this Montreal DJ's vision of futuristic robotic love-ins has momentarily deserted him, normal service may well shortly be resumed. ***(JR)***



LIVE REVIEWS

Edited by Pat Long



Robert Harvey: took the A19 and drove it to Middlesbrough...

THIS IS OUR MUSIC

LEEDS' BAGGY ROAD WARRIORS INSPIRE HERO WORSHIP

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDY WILLSHER

THE MUSIC

Middlesbrough Town Hall

The Music are flying high. Robert Harvey and his crew have octopus-danced their way to 300,000 sales of their scissor-kick psychedelia debut LP worldwide. They've sauntered into the Top 20 and moonwalked into venues of the size that their erstwhile peers The Vines, The Coral and The Libertines have yet to conquer.

And tonight they're about to fly higher than ever. It's a culmination of nine months of donkey work taking the long road and touring it in Europe, Japan and the cousin-shagging hick towns of America. Tonight, as Robert Harvey puts the steps on, The Music collectively step up to the next level.

This is the first date of a UK headline tour that'll see them play in front of 12,000 people. It's also an evening that witnesses the emergence of the true Music. A coming of age, for a band where only one member has turned 20.

Tonight they see off the spindly wig-outs that so characterised their early efforts, replacing them with a more controlled spirit – so second single 'You Might As Well Try To Fuck Me' is out, 'Jag Tune' is in. The rambling raw power of 'The Walls Get Smaller' is replaced by reined-in displays of aggression like 'New Instrumental'. The cumulative sound, as you'd imagine for a group who spend so long on the road, is tighter than Dolf De Datsun's hipsters.

Robert Harvey has grown into his role, too. Still a wired little freaky dancer (whether harnessed to a guitar or not), in full physical flow he's now more playful and even more unmissable – part Bruce Lee character, part cosmic tai-chi bullshit, part Justin Timberlake.

It's evident in the new steel in their songs – the railroad dirt of 'The Truth Is No Words', the Primal Scream-alike gospel of 'Float' and the anthemic rage against the man, 'The People'. 'Getaway', Harvey's letter to someone on the other side (which kind of makes it The Music's 'Stan'), is one of their finest moments. It's always been amped, but now it's pumped not just by volume – there's emotional muscle being flexed too. *"What's it like up there?"* Harvey pines, *"Do you worry any more?/How's it feel up there?/So much left to say..."*

It inspires the kind of idolatry once reserved for Richard Ashcroft and Ian Brown: only the hero worship now goes along the lines of people dressed exactly like Robert Harvey chanting, "MUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU-SIC, MUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU-SIC, MUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU-SIC".

'Getaway' is rivalled only by the moment when Robert takes to the stage with an *acoustic* guitar – to the obvious befuddlement of his plugged-in bandmates – to perform 'Alone' acoustically. An overlooked B-side to 'Take The Long Road...', it's one of their few 'straight' songs. Harvey has apparently written quite a few little numbers like this recently. Let's hope it's true. Because then The Music will be destined for stages even bigger than the ones they're currently conquering.

Imran Ahmed

...and Middlesbrough was quite pleased to see him

CAPDOWN/TWOFOLD
Leicester Princess Charlotte

It must be annoying when the support band ask to borrow your gear and proceed to blow you away. Combining a commendable knowledge of '80s hardcore titans Black Flag with an ability to recreate At The Drive-In's vocal piercings, cherubic London four-piece Twofold are definitely ones to watch. But for now, they seem happy to take the peanuts offered to them by the disinterested members of the front row. Good effort.

The burghers of their hometown of Milton Keynes might be proud of them, but out in the real world Capdown do little to extend the attention span. Genial blighters they may be, but tracks like the instantly dull 'Mr Music' only serve to undermine their onstage enthusiasm. Plus, if you *are* going to play a sax solo, at least have the decency to keep it a secret until the last possible moment.

Capdown obviously pride themselves on being able to combine random elements of reggae, hardcore, punk and ska in a short musical space. They're misguided, though. Being eclectic will *never* be an excuse for sounding so infuriatingly bog-standard – Milton Keynes or not.

Hardeep Phull

EASYWORLD
London Islington Union Chapel

It's not often, upon arriving at a gig, that *NME* is handed a smoking jacket and asked to compère the evening from one of Val Doonican's old chairs. But this is no ordinary end-of-year mash-up: in 2002 Easyworld were like Graham Norton gatecrashing a Po-Faced C—— convention – a tornado of spangly-eyed, Ash-arama pop larks tearing through all the cobber-rock breakdowns and Brooklyn smack-chic sniffiness. So tonight they joyously defile God's house with plastic tiaras, glittery teen-cheeks and impromptu acoustic turns. A pair of transvestite alien fairies from the crowd cover superbly maudlin new single 'Junkies', someone does a poem about a spider and *NME*'s own go at 'Oliver's Army' is met with the roar of A&R men putting chequebooks back in pockets. There's not a speck of shame in the house.

Easyworld: never knowingly over sober

And Easyworld are the frothing peak of the party. There are festive covers of 'Fairytale Of New York' and – um – 'Enjoy The Silence', while charming versions of 'You & Me' and 'Bleach' are enough to start internet petitions demanding a recount of any chart where they're not Number One. It takes impeccable cool to be this anti-cool, of course. And that's why, when future archeologists are puzzling over the dug-up remains of Interpol's trousers, it's Easyworld hits they'll be humming.

Mark Beaumont

MC PITMAN
London SW1 ICA

Could this be the sound of the underground? MC Pitman purports to be a bilious rapper/coal miner from somewhere north of the M25. Until now, his sardonic rhymes have been restricted to two humorous singles, 'Phone Pitman 2' and 'Witness The Pitness', on which he questions the integrity of assorted urban superstars in his gruff northern manner.

This, his first ever live PA in the city he loathes, in a "fookin poncey art gallery full of media tossers", sheds no light on the true identity of Pitman's creator. Dressed in hard hat (with headlamp) and donkey jacket, and armed with biscuits and a flask of tea, Pitman straddles the comedy-rap divide awkwardly and flounders when replying to hecklers, relying on abuse rather than wit. He's fine when sticking to the script (*"It's getting hot in here – so turn the heating down!"*) and generates laughs primarily through the audience's familiarity with his punchlines.

Stubbornly parochial, he's a parody of an embittered English rapper who believes the true spirit of hip-hop died in 1988. Much like David Brent, Pitman's comic potential is limited, but amusing. If he knows what's good for him, that fatal mining accident shouldn't be too far off.

Piers Martin

THE GOLDEN VIRGINS
Newcastle Cluny

Something other than the putrid North Sea must be flowing into the river Wear, because cells of the new rock revolution are springing up in Sunderland, a city not previously renowned for its contribution to rock's rich tapestry. Consider the jerky splendour of the Futureheads, the melodic allure of J Xaverre and the fizzy pop lunacy of The Golden Virgins. Sounds like there's a storm brewing.

From the moment Lucas Renney begins to lollop around like a pimp-walking Ryan Adams, it's evident that an exhilarating rock'n'roll proposition is in the offing. 'I've Seen The Light' stomps like the Velvets at a barn dance, while the electro-infused 'I Am A Camera' wiggles and squirms like a greased pig. Then there's the elation of forthcoming single, 'Renaissance Kid', a glorious rollercoaster of hope and regret with Space Invaders synths and glam guitars. When it crashes to an end, people applaud till their hands are sore. All that remains is for the Virgins to smile a tender smile skywards.

And so the storm cloud grows.

James Jam

SUN, SEA, SANGRIA, SKAG...

IS SPAIN READY FOR THE SEX AND DRUGS-FUELLED INVASION OF THE LIBERTINES?

Paella and mashed: Pete shows off his 'unique' gaffa-tape peephole jeans...

THE LIBERTINES
Valencia Roxy Discoteca

Ever believed in the existence of a parallel universe? Well, tonight *NME* witnessed it with our very eyes! Onstage stagger The Libertines. Minds mangled from three weeks of sleazy manoeuvring across Europe, they dwell in a private cosmos of free beer and euphoric narcotics where all present are sex slaves eager to be initiated into the arcane ways of Albion.

In close orbit lurks a 200-strong cluster of Spanish rock biz types. The ones who don't resemble members of the cast of *Miami Vice* look like they've just been turfed out of a Lenny Kravitz video-shoot. All of them will happily dance the lambada upside-down to anything, just as long as MTV have told them it's cool to do so.

The skaggy, whippet-thin song structures; the shaggy mop-topped non-harmonising from Carl'n'Pete; the ever-visible fizz of sexual chemistry which sees the pair of them snog onstage not once but THREE times tonight; the crowd are shown no mercy. Tonight The Libertines are no longer a spindly indie-band wearing Britpop's old wardrobe, but a dissolute, past-caring rock'n'roll whirlwind.

The badly dressed tribes from the Enrique Iglesias-loving suburbs of a city designed by robots crumble in their presence. They end with a glorious, shambolic 'I Get Along'. The whole place writhes like it's living *la vida loca*.

Out of *this* world.

Paul Moody

...while Carl thrills Spain with the 'dissolute, past-caring' look

PHOTOGRAPHY: RETNA

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02	Lancaster Sugar House	0161 832 1111
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06	Sheffield Octagon	0114 222 8777
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New date

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FEBRUARY

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Tuesday	04	MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY	0161 832 1111
Wednesday	05	LIVERPOOL BARFLY	0870 907 0999
Friday	07	EDINBURGH VENUE	0870 90 33 444
Saturday	08	GLASGOW BARFLY	0870 90 33 444
Sunday	09	NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY	0115 941 2544
		EXTRA DATE ADDED DUE TO OVERWHELMING DEMAND	
Wednesday	12	LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM	020 7734 8932

Tickets £7adv. / £10adv. (London) (subject to booking fee)
24hr cc hotline 0871 2200 260 or buy online @ www.gigsandtours.com
Single "Danger! High Voltage" on XL Recordings out now www.electricsix.com

SJM Concerts by arrangement with 13 Artists present

Ed Harcourt

January			
29	Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms	023 9286 3911	
30	Oxford Zodiac	01865 420 042	
February			
01	Sheffield Leadmill	0845 300 4050	
02	Northampton Soundhaus	01604 250 898	
03	Stoke Sugarmill	01782 206 000	
05	Northumbria University	0191 261 2606	
06	Leeds Cockpit	0113 245 5570	
07	Edinburgh Liquid Rooms	0131 220 3234	
08	Glasgow King Tuts	0870 169 0100	
10	Manchester University	0161 832 1111	
11	Liverpool University	0151 256 5555	
12	Norwich Arts Centre	01603 660 352	
14	Gloucester Guildhall	01452 505 089	
15	Bristol Fleece	0117 929 9008	
16	Cardiff Ifor Bach	029 2023 2199	
18	Brighton Concorde	01273 772 770	
19	London Scala	020 7403 3331, 020 7734 8932	

Tickets £12adv. except London £13.50adv. (subject to booking fee)
24hr cc hotline: 0871 2200 260 buy online: www.gigsandtours.com
New album From Every Sphere due February 2003

www.edharcourt.com

SJM Concerts by arrangement with ITB present

gusgus

plus guests
VENUS HUM

January 2003

Thu	23	GLASGOW KING TUTS	0870 169 0100
Sun	26	MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY	0161 832 1111
Mon	27	LONDON SCALA	020 7403 3331

Tickets £8.50adv. except London £10adv. (subject to booking fee)
24hr cc hotline: 0871 2200 260 or online: www.gigsandtours.com
New single DAVID released 20th January 2003 taken from the album ATTENTION out now

SJM Concerts by arrangement with ITB present...

THE RAVEONETTES

FEBRUARY

MONDAY	3RD	WOLVERHAMPTON, LITTLE CIVIC	01902 552 121
TUESDAY	4TH	GLASGOW, KING TUT'S	0141 221 5279
WEDNESDAY	5TH	NEWCASTLE, UNIVERSITY	0191 233 0444
SATURDAY	8TH	LEEDS, UNIVERSITY BRIGHTON BEACH	0113 245 5570
SUNDAY	9TH	NORTHAMPTON, SOUNDHAUS	01604 250 898
MONDAY	10TH	NORWICH, ARTS CENTRE	01603 660 352
TUESDAY	11TH	MANCHESTER, ROADHOUSE	0161 832 1111
THURSDAY	13TH	NOTTINGHAM, ROCK CITY	0115 958 8484
FRIDAY	14TH	LONDON, 100 CLUB	020 7403 3331 / 020 7734 8932
SATURDAY	15TH	CARDIFF, BARFLY	0870 907 0999
SUNDAY	16TH	BRIGHTON, FREEBUTT	01273 772770

All Tickets (subject to booking fee) 24hr cc hotline: 0871 2200 260 or buy online: www.gigsandtours.com
Attack of the Ghost Riders LIMITED EDITION 1000 ONLY 7" AVAILABLE NOW www.theraveonettes.com

damien rice

February

Mon 17	NORWICH ARTS CENTRE	01603 660 352
Tue 18	CARDIFF TOUCAN CLUB	029 2022 4905
Thu 20	UNION CHAPEL	020 7403 3331, 020 7734 8932
Fri 21	MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY	0161 832 1111
Sat 22	LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY	0151 256 5555
Sun 23	GLASGOW KING TUTS	0141 221 5279

24hr cc hotline 0871 2200 260 or buy online www.gigsandtours.com
Debut album "O" out now www.damienrice.com

24hr cc hotline 0871 2200 260 www.gigsandtours.com - exclusive live announcements and priority booking

SJM Concerts presents

SJM Concerts by arrangement with The Agency present

THE MUSIC

BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND
plus special guests

Friday 2nd May
BLACKPOOL Empress Ballroom
0161 237 5554 / 0161 832 1111 / 01253 292 029
Winter Gardens B/O & Piccadilly B/O (Manchester & Liverpool)

Saturday 3rd May
BRIDLINGTON Spa
0113 244 4600 / 01262 678 258
Bridlington Spa B/O & Jumbo Records (Leeds)
Hull City Hall B/O & York Barbican B/O

Tickets £13.50adv. (subject to booking fee)
24 HR CC HOTLINE 0871 220 0260 ON-LINE www.gigsandtours.com
Coach/Ticket packages available please check www.themusic.uk.com for details
THE TRUTH IS NO WORDS OUT 17/02/03 www.themusic.uk.com

SJM Concerts by arrangement with 13 Artists present

SUPERGRASS

plus very special guests at Wembley only

THE DATSUNS

The Polyphonic Spree

& THE RAVEONETTES

SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY
LONDON WEMBLEY ARENA
0870 739 0739 / 020 7403 3331

TICKET PRICE: £17.50ADV. EXCEPT LONDON £18.50ADV. (SUBJECT TO BOOKING FEE)
24HR CC HOTLINE: 0871 2200 260 BUY ONLINE: WWW.GIGSANDTOURS.COM
THE ALBUM 'LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS' OUT NOW. WWW.SUPERGRASS.COM WWW.LIFEONOTHERPLANETS.CO.UK

plus very special guests at
Edinburgh, Manchester & York only

Ed Harcourt & THE RAVEONETTES

EDINBURGH CORN EXCHANGE
WEDNESDAY 22ND JANUARY
0870 903 3444

YORK BARBICAN
THURSDAY 23RD JANUARY
01904 656 688

MANCHESTER APOLLO
FRIDAY 24TH JANUARY
0161 242 2560, 0161 832 1111

Metropolis Music presents

METROPOLIS MUSIC PRESENTS

NME AWARDS SHOWS 2003

EXCLUSIVE NEW SHOW

Tuesday 4th February — **aqualung** — **LONDON SCALA**

THE WARLOCKS plus guests

Tickets: £11.60 adv. [50p donation to Scope]

Tuesday 4th February

starsailor SOLD OUT

NADA SURF + THE 22-20s + HOPE OF THE STATES

Wednesday 5th February

Nas

Plus guests. Tickets: £15.60 adv. [50p donation to Scope]

Thursday 6th February

THE COOPER TEMPLE CLAUSE SOLD OUT

LADYTRON + IKARA COLT + THE RAVEONETTES

Friday 7th February

SOLD OUT

FACE TOMORROW + 80's MATCHBOX B-LINE DISASTER + KINESIS

Saturday 8th February

IDLEWILD

CAVE IN + THE BEATINGS + MY MORNING JACKET

Tickets: £12.60 adv. [50p donation to Scope]

Sunday 9th February

THE DAKOTAS SOLD OUT

THE POLYPHONIC SPREE + INTERPOL + THE THRILLS

Monday 10th February

SAVES THE DAY

THE BELLRAYS + HELL IS FOR HEROES + THE STAR SPANGLES

Tickets: £12.60 adv. [50p donation to Scope]

Tuesday 11th February

THE CORAL SOLD OUT

THE BASEMENT + SLEEPY JACKSON + KINGS OF LEON

Wednesday 12th February

THE LIBERTINES

DETROIT COBRAS + THE SIGHTS + THE HISS

Tickets: £11.20 adv. [£1.00 donation to scope]

THE VINES NO LONGER APPEARING. REFUNDS AND RE-BOOKING AVAILABLE FROM POINT OF PURCHASE

LONDON ASTORIA

Friday 7th February 8pm - 2am — **THE STREETS** — Tickets: £15.60 adv. [50p donation to Scope]

ROLL DEEP feat. DIZZEE RASCAL AND WILEY + MORE FIRE CREW

KILLA KELA (MULTIVOCALIST/BEATBOX) feat. SPITKINGDOM SOUNDSYSTEM

LONDON BRIXTON ACADEMY

Box Office: 020 7344 4040 or NME Ticket line: 0870 1663 663 or go online @ www.nmetickets.com

Tickets also available from: Credit Card Hotline: 020 7287 0932, Stargreen: 020 7734 8932 Way Ahead: 020 7403 3331. Tickets subject to booking fee. Buy on-line: www.gigsandtours.com

Scope - registered charity 208231

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Metropolis Music, DF Concerts and SJM Concerts by arrangement with Helter Skelter present

Teenage Fanclub

plus guests EUGENE KELLY & VERA CRUISE

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATES, ORIGINAL TICKETS REMAN VALID

FEBRUARY

SUN	02	MIDDLESBROUGH TOWN HALL	01642 358 087
MON	03	MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY	0161 832 1111
TUE	04	LIVERPOOL STANLEY THEATRE	0151 256 5555
WED	05	STOKE SUGARMILL	0115 912 9000
THU	06	LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY	0113 244 4600
SAT	08	SHEFFIELD LEADMILL	0845 300 4050
SUN	09	NORTHAMPTON ROADMENDERS	01604 604 603
MON	10	NORWICH WATERFRONT	02392 863 911
TUE	11	CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION	01223 511 511
THU	13	BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY 2	0115 912 9000
FRI	14	BRISTOL ANSON ROOMS	0870 44 44 400
SUN	16	PORTSMOUTH WEDGWOOD ROOMS	02392 863 911
MON	17	OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY	0115 912 9000
TUE	18	LONDON ASTORIA SOLD OUT	

EXTRA DATE ADDED DUE TO DEMAND

WED	19	LONDON ASTORIA 020 7344 4040, 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7344 4040	
FRI	21	GLASGOW BARROWLAND	0870 169 0100
SUN	23	EDINBURGH LIQUID ROOM	0870 169 0100
MON	24	ABERDEEN LEMON TREE	0870 169 0100

All tickets subject to booking fee. Buy online: www.gigsandtours.com
All tickets £10 except Portsmouth £10.50 and Scotland / London £12

'Four thousand seven hundred and sixty six seconds; a short cut to Teenage Fanclub' released 27th Jan

---

Metropolis Music by arrangement with Coda presents

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION

FEBRUARY

WED	19	OXFORD THE ZODIAC	Tickets from Box Office: 01865 420 042 / www.thezodiac.co.uk
FRI	21	LONDON SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE	Tickets £12.50 adv. from 0870 771 2000, 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7403 3331
SAT	22	BRISTOL ANSON ROOMS	Tickets from Box Office: 0117 929 9008
TUE	25	LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY	Tickets from Box Office: 0113 283 2800
THU	27	WARWICK UNIVERSITY	Tickets from Box Office: 024 7657 3057
FRI	28	LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY	Tickets from Box Office: 0151 256 5555 Tickets subject to booking fee. Buy on-line: www.gigsandtours.com

NEW ALBUM 'ENEMY OF THE ENEMY' RELEASED 03 FEBRUARY

WWW.ASIANDUBFOUNDATION.COM

Metropolis Music, SJM Concerts and DF Concerts by arrangement with The Agency present

MULL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Plus guests

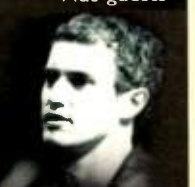
MARCH

Wed	26	NEWCASTLE Uni of Northumbria	0191 261 2606
Thu	27	BIRMINGHAM Academy 2	0870 771 2000
Sat	29	SHEFFIELD Leadmill	0845 300 4050
Sun	30	LIVERPOOL Stanley Theatre	0151 256 5555
Mon	31	BRISTOL Fleece	0870 4444 400

APRIL

Tue	01	BRIGHTON Concorde 2	01273 709 709
Thu	03	LONDON Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000, 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7403 3331, 020 7344 4040	
Fri	04	MANCHESTER University	0870 771 2000
Sat	05	GLASGOW Barrowlands	0870 169 0100

Tickets: £9 adv. except London: £11 adv. / Glasgow: £10 adv.
Tickets subject to booking Fee. Buy on-line: www.gigsandtours.com



New single 'The Final Arrears' released on Blanco / Warners February 17

The Second album 'Us' released on Blanco / Warners March 3

www.mullhistoricalsociety.com

Metropolis Music, SJM Concerts & DF Concerts by arrangement with Primary Talent International present

lamb

plus guests

February

Fri	14	MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY	0161 832 1111
Sat	15	BRIGHTON CORN EXCHANGE	01273 709 709
Sun	16	BRISTOL ACADEMY	0870 771 2000
Wed	19	GLASGOW QMU	0870 169 0100
Thu	20	LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY	0113 244 4600
Fri	21	LONDON BRIXTON ACADEMY 8.00PM - 2.00AM	0870 771 2000, 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932 020 7403 3331, 020 7344 4040

Tickets: £12.00 adv. except London: £15.00 adv.
Tickets subject to booking fee. Buy on-line: www.gigsandtours.com

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Metropolis Music by arrangement with The Agency present

my morning jacket

Plus guests

FEBRUARY

MON	03	BRISTOL LOUISIANA	0117 928 9008
TUE	04	LONDON UPSTAIRS AT THE GARAGE (JIM JAMES SOLO SHOW)	0207 7287 0932 / 020 7734 8932 / 020 7344 4040
WED	05	MANCHESTER HOP & GRAPE	0116 832 1111
THU	06	CAMBRIDGE BOAT RACE	01223 508 533
MON	10	LONDON GARAGE	0207 7287 0932 / 020 7734 8932 / 020 7344 4040

TICKETS £7.00 ADV. EXCEPT 10TH FEB £8.00 ADV.
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METROPOLIS MUSIC BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CNL PRESENTS

BURNING BRIDES

PLUS GUESTS

FEBRUARY

13	BRISTOL LOUISIANA	0117 928 9008
20	MANCHESTER HOP & GRAPE	0116 832 1111
21	LONDON GARAGE	020 7287 0932 / 020 7734 8932 / 020 7344 4040

TICKETS £7.00 ADV. EXCEPT LONDON £8.00 ADV.
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STEVE-O

PLUS JACKASS GUESTS

MONDAY 03 FEBRUARY
LONDON
SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
0870 771 2000, 020 7287 0932
020 7734 8932, PLUS USUAL AGENTS

WEDNESDAY 05 FEBRUARY
BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY
0870 771 2000

FRIDAY 07 FEBRUARY
LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY
0151 256 5555

SUNDAY 09 FEBRUARY
GLASGOW BARROWLANDS
0141 339 8383

TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY
NEWCASTLE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHUMBRIA
0191 261 2606

THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY
LEEDS UNIVERSITY
0113 255 5570

FRIDAY 14 FEBRUARY
MANCHESTER ACADEMY
0161 832 1111

SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY
NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
0115 958 8484

MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY
CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE
01223 357 851

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY
BRISTOL ACADEMY
0870 771 2000

THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY
SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL
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PLUS **SERAFIN** (FEB 11 TO FEB 26 PLUS MARCH 7 & 8)
WITH **HELL IS FOR HEROES** (FEB 27 TO MAR 12 EXCEPT 8 MARCH)
AND **INME** (MARCH 8 ONLY)

TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
NORWICH UEA

WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL

THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2003 SOLD OUT
BRIGHTON DOME

SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2003 SOLD OUT
IPSWICH REGENT

SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
OXFORD
BROOKES UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
CAMBRIDGE
CORN EXCHANGE

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY

FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
MANCHESTER APOLLO

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
GLASGOW BARROWLANDS

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY SOLD OUT
ABERDEEN MUSIC HALL

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2003 SOLD OUT
NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
OF NORTHUMBRIA

WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2003 SOLD OUT
LEEDS UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2003 SOLD OUT
LIVERPOOL
ROYAL COURT

SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2003
NEWPORT CENTRE
01633 662 666 & 02920 230 130

SUNDAY 2 MARCH SOLD OUT
BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY

TUESDAY 4 MARCH SOLD OUT
BRISTOL
COLSTON HALL

WEDNESDAY 5 MARCH 2003 SOLD OUT
EXETER UNIVERSITY
01392 425 309

FRIDAY 7 MARCH SOLD OUT
EXTRA DATE SATURDAY 8 MARCH 2003
LONDON
BRIXTON ACADEMY
0870 771 2000,
C.C.Hotline 020 7287 0932,
Stargreen 020 7734 8932,
Wayahead 020 7403 3331,
Ticketmaster 020 7344 4040
plus usual agents.

TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2003 SOLD OUT
DUNDEE CAIRD HALL

WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2003 SOLD OUT
GLASGOW BARROWLANDS

All Tickets £12.50 adv. except London £14.50 adv. (subject to booking fee)
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FEEDER NATIONAL 24HR CC HOTLINE 0115 9129151
NEW ALBUM **COMFORT IN SOUND** OUT NOW

L O W

February

03	Edinburgh Queens Hall	£12.00 adv.	0870 0600 100
04	Aberdeen Lemon Tree	£13.50 adv.	01224 642 230
05	Glasgow QMU	£12.00 adv.	0870 0600 100
06	Newcastle University	£10.00 adv.	0191 261 2606
07	Manchester University	£11.50 adv.	0161 832 1111
08	Leeds Parish Church	£12.00 adv.	0113 245 5570
10	Birmingham Academy 2	£10.00 adv.	0870 771 2000
11	Bristol Academy	£10.00 adv.	0870 771 2000
12	Brighton St Georges Church	£13.00 adv.	01273 325 440
14	London Union Chapel	£13.50 adv.	020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932

020 7403 3331, 020 7344 4040, plus usual agents
All tickets subject to booking fee. Buy online www.gigsandtours.com

A Metropolis Music, SJM Concerts, PCL and Melting Vinyl presentation by arrangement with The Agency
Album TRUST available now on Rough Trade records

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the delgados

Plus special guests **Aereogramme**

JANUARY
Wed 29 LEEDS CITY VARIETIES 0113 243 0808
Thu 30 MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY 0161 832 1111
Fri 31 LONDON SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
0870 771 2000, 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7403 3331, 020 7344 4040

FEBRUARY
Sat 01 BRIGHTON PAVILION 01273 709 709
Sun 02 BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY 0870 771 2000
Mon 03 NEWCASTLE NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY 0191 261 2606
Tue 04 PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE, ORIGINAL TICKETS REMAIN VALID
GLASGOW QMU 0870 220 1116, 0141 339 8383, www.cplweb.com
All tickets subject to booking fee. www.gigsandtours.com
New album 'Hate' out now on Mantra

Metropolis Music, SJM Concerts & DF Concerts by arrangement with The Agency present

SUM 41

SUM ON YOUR FACE TOUR

Plus special guests
THE MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES

February

Sat	01	MANCHESTER MEN ARENA	0161 930 8000 / 0161 832 1111
Sun	02	NOTTINGHAM ARENA	0870 121 0123
Mon	03	GLASGOW BRAEHEAD ARENA	0870 169 0100
Thu	06	CARDIFF ARENA	02920 224 488 / 0870 0667 799
Fri	07	PLYMOUTH PAVILION SOLD OUT	01752 229 922
Sat	08	WEMBLEY ARENA	0870 739 0739 / 020 7287 0932 / 020 7734 8932 020 7403 3331 / 020 7344 4040

Tickets: £15.00 adv. except London: £16.00 adv. subject to booking fee

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or buy on-line: www.gigsandtours.com

NEW SINGLE 'THE HELL SONG' OUT FEBRUARY 10TH
AND NEW ALBUM 'DOES THIS LOOK INFECTED' OUT NOW

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temptation records PRESENT

the RAin baND

medium 21

PLUS GUESTS

FEBRUARY
18 CAMBRIDGE BOAT RACE 01223 508 533
19 STOKE SUGARMILL 0115 912 9000
20 BRISTOL LOUISIANNA 0117 928 9008
21 CARDIFF BARFLY 0870 907 0999
24 NORWICH ARTS CENTRE 01603 660 352
METROPOLIS MUSIC PRESENTATION
25 LONDON CARGO 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932
26 NORTHAMPTON SOUNDHAUS 01604 250 898
27 LIVERPOOL BARFLY 0870 907 0999
28 NEWCASTLE THE CLUNY 0191 230 4474

MARCH
03 YORK FIBBERS 01904 651 250
04 SHEFFIELD CASBAH 01142 780 890
05 ABERDEEN LAVA 01224 648 000
06 DUNDEE THE READING ROOMS 01382 228 496
07 PERTH TWA TAMS 01738 629 730
08 GLASGOW KING TUTS 0141 221 5279

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First 50 through door receive a temptation records sampler

www.temptationrecords.co.uk

The Rain Band: *EASY RIDER* single out 17th Feb
www.therainband.com

Medium 21: *DAYBREAK VS PRIDE* single out 24th Feb
www.medium21.co.uk

Metropolis Music and Regular Music by arrangement with Helter Skelter present

NEKO CASE

Plus special guest **BOBBY BARE JR.**

20|01|03 LONDON DINGWALLS
Tickets £10.00 020 7287 0932
21|01|03 MANCHESTER NIGHT AND DAY
Tickets £8.00 0161 832 1111
22|01|03 GLASGOW BARFLY
Tickets £8.00 0870 903 3444
www.matadorrecords.com

MATADOR

Metropolis Music by arrangement with Helter Skelter present

BLUEBIRD

Plus guests

FEBRUARY
TUE 11 LONDON BARFLY KERRANG!
Tickets £7 adv. 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7344 4040
WED 12 BRISTOL LOUISIANA
Tickets £6 adv 0870 44 44 400
THU 13 LONDON METRO CLUB
Tickets £7 adv. 020 7287 0932, 020 7734 8932, 020 7344 4040
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'Hot Blood' out now on Sweet Nothing records. www.bluebirdsounds.com

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COUNTING CROWS
LIVE IN CONCERT
HARD CANDY

PLUS SPECIAL GUEST
GEMMA HAYES

JANUARY 2003
DF Concerts Presents

15	GLASGOW SECC	0870 040 4000
21	BIRMINGHAM NEC ARENA	0870 909 4133
22	SHEFFIELD HALLAM FM ARENA	0114 256 5656
26	WEMBLEY ARENA	0870 739 0739
27	BOURNEMOUTH INT CENTRE	01202 456456
29	CARDIFF INT ARENA	02920 224488
30	MANCHESTER MEN ARENA	0161 930 8000
31	NEWCASTLE TELEWEST ARENA	0870 707 8000

Tickets for all shows £21.00 except London £22.50
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NEW ALBUM 'HARD CANDY' OUT NOW.
A ClearChannel presentation by arrangement with ITB

Lemon Jelly
PATAGONIAN TOUR
SPRING 2003

FEBRUARY			
MON	24	CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION	01223 511 511
TUE	25	BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY	0870 903 2222
WED	26	BRIGHTON CONCORDE	01273 772770
FRI	28	MANCHESTER ACADEMY	0161 832 1111
SAT	29	PUNTA NATALES TREN MODEL	00562 7000 555
SUN	30	TORRES DEL PAINE LAGO GREY	00562 7000 555
MARCH			
SAT	01	GLASGOW G.MU	0870 169 0100
SUN	02	EDINBURGH QUEENS HALL	0870 169 0100
TUE	04	BRISTOL ACADEMY	0870 771 2000
THU	06	LONDON FORUM	0207 344 0044
FRI	07	LONDON FORUM	0207 344 0044

EXTRA DATE! TELL YOUR MUM!

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sun 19 oedipus + daystar silversun
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Tue 28 BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY 0870 771 2000
Thu 30 SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY 0114 222 8777, 0114 251 7000
Fri 31 LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY 0151 256 5555

FEBRUARY 2003
Sat 01 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 0161 832 1111
Mon 03 LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY 0113 244 4600
Tue 04 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY 0115 941 2544
Wed 05 NORWICH UEA 01603 508 050
Fri 07 PORTSMOUTH PYRAMID 023 9235 8608
Sat 08 CARDIFF UNIVERSITY 029 2078 1458
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Thu 16th Jan - The Mule Boom + The Vessels + Actual Size (£5 adv)
Mon 20th Jan - 4ft Fingers + Caffeine + Complex GSL (£5 adv)
Wed 22nd Jan - Medium 21 + Draw + The Cherokees (£6 adv)
Thu 30th Jan - Eccentric Man presents: Dukes Of Nothing + TAINT + Sexmaniacs + Send More Paramedics (£7 adv)
barfly info@barflyclub.com The Metro @ The Metro 19-23 Oxford Street, W1 (Nearest tube: Tot ct Rd)
Thu 23rd Jan - Junior Senior + Psychid + Parva (£6 adv)
Tue 28th Jan - Stateside Hombres (£6 adv)
barfly liverpool.info@barflyclub.com @ The Masque 90 Seel Street LIVERPOOL Liverpool L1 4BH 0151 707 6171
Sun 19th Jan- Koufax + Grampus 8 Victor FME (£4)
barfly cardiff.info@barflyclub.com Kingsway, Cardiff, CARDIFF CF10 3FD Tel: 02920 396 589
Sun19th Jan - Starski + 22-20s + Regardless (£4 adv, 7-10pm)
barfly glasgow.info@barflyclub.com 260 Clyde Street, GLASGOW Glasgow, G1 4JH Tel: 0141 204 5700
Thu 16th Jan - Koufax + Kevin Devine + Pupkin + Veda (£5 adv)
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LIVE GIG GUIDE

From Wednesday January 15 to Tuesday January 21

Britain's best and biggest gig list. Send your dates to *NME* Gig Guide, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. Or fax the info to 020 7261 7718. Or email to *gigs@ipcmedia.com*. To ensure publication, your dates should reach us at least 14 days before our cover date. Please send a telephone number for all venues with your listings

VISIT *NME*'S GIG SEARCH AT www.nmetickets.com

WEDNESDAY 15

ABERDEEN Downroads/Ken Hutchin/Saint Maybe Dr Drakes 01224 596999
BELFAST The Thrills Auntie Annie's 028 9050 1660
BIRMINGHAM Soniquella/Carlo Edwards No 8 0121 643 5835
BRIGHTON Malowski/Domestica/The Contrast Freebutt 01273 603974
Jesse Sykes & The Sweet Hereafter/Jonah Hex Prince Albert 01273 730499
BRISTOL Como/K3/Super 8 Fleece & Firkin 0117 945 0996
The Moths Louisiana 0117 926 5978
BURY ST EDMUNDS The Exiles/Suffer Kiss Prior Inn 01284 748941
CARDIFF Juniper/Incus Nic/Debauchee Barfly 029 2066 7658
DERBY Sick On The Bus/Foamers/The Filaments Victoria Inn 01332 740091
GLASGOW Counting Crows/Gemma Hayes SECC 0141 248 3000
The Flaming Lips Barrowlands 0141 552 4601
Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
HANLEY InMe/Crackout Sugarmill 01782 214991
HARTLEPOOL Switch Studio 01429 424440
INVERNESS Easyworld/Medium 21/Dionysus Raigmore 01463 221546
LEEDS Shadow Of Memories/Mouth/Infinitum New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
LEICESTER My Awesome Compilation/Hiding With Girls/Funeral For A Friend/That Fateful Day Attik 0116 222 3800
LONDON Beans Old Street Cargo EC2 020 7613 7731
Gina Birch/Ana De Silva/Linus Aldgate East Spritz E1 020 7392 9032
Brount Industries/Gravenhurst/War Against Sleep Farringdon Betsey Trotwood EC1 020 7253 4285
Bubba/Chet Shoreditch On The Rocks E2 020 7278 1074
Dawn Parade/Skyscraper/Herbie/8 Jetz Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
DUNE/Munkster/Chopper Harris Tottenham Court Road Metro Club W1 020 7437 0964
Ella Guru King's Cross Water Rats WC1 020 7436 7211
FB Citizens/The Perfect/Polinski/Creeps Highbury Corner Buffalo Bar N1 020 7359 6191
The Hub/13 Amp Sun Putney Half Moon SW15 020 8780 9383
Arthur Lee & Love South Bank Royal Festival Hall SE1 020 7960 4242
Letter Six/Kyniska/Sacha Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
Virginia McNaughton Shoreditch Strong Rooms EC2 020 7426 5100
Mild Mannered Janitors Soho Gossips W1 020 7434 4480
Novello/Blood The Freak/Caiman/Axiambay/Deke/Sirens/Disraeli Gears Brixton Bug Bar SW2 020 7733 9996
One Eyed Bishops/The Smouldering Sons Shoreditch Catch E2 020 7729 6097
Part Chimp Aldgate East 93 Feet East E1 020 7247 6095
Silvertop/McDowell/Leon Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
MANCHESTER Joey Coen Riot/Second To Last Star & Garter 0161 273 6726
Get Up Kids University, Hop And Grape 0161 275 2930
Of Montreal/Herman Dune Tmesis 0161 832 1111
Wallis/Slide/Hurricane Party Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
SOUTHAMPTON Reuben Joiners 023 8022 5612
ST ALBANS Grand Juke/Distracted/Big Day Out Horn 01727 853143
STOURBRIDGE Godsize/Harpies Rock Café 2000 01384 390918

THURSDAY 16

ABERDEEN Staccato Set Dr Drakes 01224 596999
BATH Silver Surfer/Summer Teeth/The Fits/Frozen Waves Moles 01225 404445
BIRMINGHAM Red Jack Edwards No 8 0121 643 5835
BOURNEMOUTH Track 3 Mister Smith's 01202 291617
BRIGHTON The Agitators Freebutt 01273 603974
BRISTOL Ad Nauseum/The Palaminos/Buster Friendly Fleece & Firkin 0117 945 0996
Retina/You Are Here Louisiana 0117 926 5978
CAMBRIDGE Of Montreal Portland Arms 01223 357268
COVENTRY The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Colosseum 024 7655 4473
DERBY Redhill/Dead By Dawn Victoria Inn 01332 740091
DERRY The Thrills/Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Nerve Centre 028 7126 0562
EXETER Nodens Ictus/Semblance Phoenix 01392 667080
Reuben/Tyler Cavern Club 01392 495370
GLASGOW La Chunky/Cat Kills Six/Underwood King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
GRIMSBY Sophie Ellis-Bextor Auditorium 01472 311311
HIGH WYCOMBE This Year's Model/Reagan/Alp White Horse 01494 527672
LEEDS Buzzard New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Hammond Sandwich Hi-Fi Club 0113 242 7353
LEICESTER Palmers Mullet/Skarlet Tripp Attik 0116 222 3800
LONDON Tori Amos Hammersmith Apollo W6 0870 606 3400
Asian Dub Foundation Old Street Cargo EC2 020 7613 7731
Bullet Galloway/Friday/Finn Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095
Circa 1983/Pilgrimage/Detwiler Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
Dashboard Confessional Tottenham Court Road Metro Club W1 020 7437 0964
Ebb Notting Hill Arts Club W11 020 7460 4459
Fake Concept/Days Of Worth/Done Without A Thought Kingston Peel 020 8546 3516
Goldrush Highbury Corner Garage N5 020 7607 1818
Household/The Useless/The Gears Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
Ronnie King Soho St Moritz W1 020 7437 0525
Mustard Plug/Captain Everything/Howard's Alias/MDF Camden Underworld NW1 020 7482 1932
Saluki/Orko/Pheromone Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
Something Corporate Islington Marquee N1 020 7288 4400
The Vinyls Farringdon Betsey Trotwood EC1 020 7253 4285
MANCHESTER Fi-Lo Radio Ashton Under Lyne, Witchwood 0161 344 0321
The Flaming Lips Academy 0161 275 2930
Skin On Skin Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
Jesse Sykes & The Sweet Hereafter/John Hoefflour Tmesis 0161 832 1111
NEWCASTLE Sick On The Bus/Foamers/The Filaments Black Swan 0191 261 9959
NOTTINGHAM The Henry Road/Freedom Sound/Big William/Jobe Old Vic 0115 958 2139
OLDHAM 10 Days Castle 01706 882759
OXFORD The Difference/Immerse/June Bullingdon Arms 01865 244516
Arthur Lee & Love Brookes University 01865 484750
PERTH Easyworld/Medium 21 Twa Tams 01738 634500
SHEFFIELD Elysian Fields/Juvenile Beauty/Bikku/Mezzo Boardwalk 0114 279 9090
SOUTHAMPTON Eve's Only Son/Piano/Oka Joiners 023 8022 5612
SUNDERLAND Sun Devils Mountain Daisy 0191 565 9075
SWINDON Third Man In Victoria 01793 535713
WINCHESTER Firefly Railway Inn 01962 867795
YORK Red Shift/Fallen Origin Fibbers 01904 651250

FRIDAY 17

ALDERSHOT Mindwire/Logo/Kabbala West End Centre 01252 330040
ARBROATH Sick On The Bus/Foamers/Segaboy/The Filaments Viewfield Hotel 01241 872446
BELFAST Counting Crows/Gemma Hayes Waterfront 028 9033 4455
The Flaming Lips Academy 0121 262 3000
BOURNEMOUTH Blue Jay Way Mister Smith's 01202 291617
BRADFORD King Tonne Rio 01274 735549
BRIGHTON Dropzone University 01273 643193
Goldrush/Black Nielson Freebutt 01273 603974
BRISTOL The Playwrights Cube Cinema 0117 907 4190
CAMBRIDGE Arthur Lee & Love Corn Exchange 01223 357851
Little Egypt Boat Race 01223 508533
CARDIFF Kaid Barfly 029 2066 7658
Make Her Cry/Hondo McLean Mount Stuart, MS1 Club 029 2030 1000
CORK Bellyman Half Moon Theatre 00 35321 427 2680
COVENTRY Clearway/Bocca Colosseum 024 7655 4473
DERBY The Killerest Expression/That Fateful Day Victoria Inn 01332 740091
DUBLIN Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Whelans 00 3531 478 0766
DURHAM Ultraviolet Daisy Hill 0191 371 0228
EDINBURGH Grand Unified Beat Jazz Basement 0131 467 2539
InMe/Crackout Venue 0131 557 3073
GLASGOW 3 Days Born/Spit Roast/Danishlovedog Fury Murrys 0141 221 6511
Kool Keith King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Shane MacGowan & The Popes Old Fruitmarket 0141 287 5511
HARTLEPOOL Scooby Doo Studio 01429 424440
HEBDEN BRIDGE Divided By Dirt Trades Club 01422 845265
HIGH WYCOMBE Mustard Plug/Captain Everything/Howard's Alias White Horse 01494 527672
KILKENNY The Thrills Cleere's Theatre 00 3535 662573
LEEDS Atlanta New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Dawn Parade Royal Park 0113 275 7494
LEICESTER Derrin Nesendorf/Dave Downing/David Wyatt Musician 0116 251 0080
Qubie/Santa Carla Picket 0151 708 5318
Nik Turner's Space Ritual Charlotte 0116 255 3956
LONDON Tori Amos Hammersmith Apollo W6 0870 606 3400
Audioslave Charing Cross Road Astoria WC2 020 7434 0403
Deborah Bonham/The View Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095
The Caesars/The Dee Rangers Tufnell Park Boston Arms N19 020 7272 8153
Clumsy/Koogar Phone Camden Barfly @ The Monarch NW1 0870 907 0999
Culture Industries/Angel Racing Food/Cavil Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
Dashboard Confessional Tottenham Court Road Metro Club W1 020 7437 0964
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster/Torquemada Highbury Corner Garage N5 020 7607 1818
Every Girl's Daddy/Bexleys/Mokita Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
Herbal Remedy/Todd Roache/Sonnet/Daniel Print Charing Cross Road Spice Of Life WC2 020 7437 7013
James Hunter Oxford Street 100 Club W1 020 7636 0933
Kung Fu Chihuahua Old Street Aquarium EC1 020 7251 6136
Quantic Ladbroke Grove Subterania W10 020 8960 4590
The Seen/The Far Cries Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
Small World/Realm Croydon Cartoon 020 8239 1616
Wanderlust/Fourth Volume/Solomon Putney Half Moon SW15 020 8780 9383
MANCHESTER 52 Teenagers/Temporary Amnesia/Cortools Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Candyheads/Tom Smith Ashton Under Lyne, Witchwood 0161 344 0321
Hedz Jellmo Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
Obsession/Lo-Classics Middleton Civic Hall 0161 643 2470
NORTH SHIELDS XL Wooden Doll 0191 258 1235
NOTTINGHAM Kevin Montgomery Forest Tavern, Maze 0115 947 5650
Rosin/Nine Domino Junktion 7 0115 970 4662
OXFORD Off The Radar/Barry & The Beachcombers/The Others Downstairs At The Zodiac 01865 420042
PLYMOUTH Reuben/Tyler JFK's, Club 103 01752 768826
PRESTON Sophie Ellis-Bextor Guildhall 01772 58858
ROCHDALE Mad Racket Transport Club 01706 632087
SHEFFIELD Big Heat Boardwalk 0114 279 9090
SOUTHAMPTON The Travoltas/Bomb Jacks Joiners 023 8022 5612
ST ALBANS The Slaves/Curvy Nature Horn 01727 853143
STOURBRIDGE Penetration Rock Café 2000 01384 390918
SUNDERLAND Elysium Duke Of Cumberland 0191 420 0568
WINCHESTER ESP/Organised Chaos Railway Inn 01962 867795
WORKINGTON Kokoko/Seraphim/Calculus Class/Kids At Play Monroe's 01900 602122
YORK Easyworld/Medium 21/Cranebuilders Fibbers 01904 651250

SATURDAY 18

ABERDEEN InMe/Crackout Lemon Tree 01224 642230
Quik/Misled Youth Dr Drakes 01224 596999
ABINGDON Redefine/Dolo Net 01235 524316
ALDERSHOT Being Drawn South/Escana/Menendez West End Centre 01252 330040
BATH Fat Cats Moles 01225 404445
BIRMINGHAM E-Dog Moseley, Jug Of Ale 0121 449 1082
Jadee Fire/Magic Bullet Theory Flapper & Firkin 0121 236 2421
BOURNEMOUTH Secret Agency Mister Smith's 01202 291617
BRADFORD Icon Of Coil/Assemblage 23 Rio 01274 735549
BRISTOL Big Jean Louisiana 0117 926 5978
The Flaming Lips Academy 0870 771 2000
CAMBRIDGE Cat On Form/Oedipus Portland Arms 01223 357268
Dawn Parade/Antihero/Slowdrowned Boat Race 01223 508533
CARDIFF Montana/Winnebago Deal Barfly 029 2066 7658
Penetration Mount Stuart, MS1 Club 029 2030 1000
CORK The Thrills Lobby Bar 00 35321 431 1113
DERBY Mustard Plug/Captain Everything/Howard's Alias Victoria Inn 01332 740091
DUBLIN Counting Crows/Gemma Hayes Point 00 3531 836 3633
Kool Keith Red Box 00 3531 478 0166
EDINBURGH Supergun/Starry Wisdom Cult/Nixie Kye Subway 0131 225 6766
GLASGOW Left Hand Element/Second Skin/Fractal Jack/Marshan King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Hans Theessink/Tam White/Rab Noakes Old Fruitmarket 0141 287 5511
GLOUCESTER Reuben Guildhall Arts Centre 01452 505089
HANLEY The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Sugarmill 01782 214991
HARTLEPOOL GBH/Uncle Fester Studio 01429 424440
HIGH WYCOMBE Clean Break/Miata Maffia/One Small Hero White Horse 01494 527672
KIRKCALDY Sick On The Bus/Foamers/The Filaments Path Tavern 01592 263671
LEEDS Monkey Fingers New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Star Bodixa Dr Wu's 0113 242 7629
LIVERPOOL Hooper/Carbon Atom Picket 0151 708 5318
Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Stanley Theatre 0151 709 9108
LONDON Bastion 4 West Kensington West One Four W14 020 7751 1044
Beerzone/Running Riot/Demob/Red Flag 77/Slaughterhouse 57 Camden Underworld NW1 020 7482 1932
Control Of Reason Peckham Ivy House SE15 020 7732 0222
Dashboard Confessional Tottenham Court Road Metro Club W1 020 7437 0964
Gregory's Chair/Cast Iron Shores/Transfusion Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
John Hoefflour Aldgate East Spritz E1 020 7392 9032
David Holmes Ladbroke Grove Subterania W10 020 8960 4590
Lillettes/Vic Twenty/The Rocks Tooting Castle SW17 020 8672 7018
Oneness Of Juju Camden Jazz Café NW1 020 7916 6060
Red Shift/The Better Ford Clinic/Skydiva Highbury Corner Garage N5 020 7607 1818
Senses Royal Oak Cherry Jam W2 020 7727 9950
The Sloans/Little Fat Hoover/Dominique/Hi-Lux Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
Subvert Charing Cross Road Mean Fiddler WC2 020 7434 0403
The View/Lick/Sunraiser Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
Cleveland Watkiss Stratford Circus E15 020 8279 1001
White Buffalo/Moonunit/The Mynah Birds Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095
The Young Knives Notting Hill Arts Club W11 020 7460 4459
MANCHESTER Monomania/Quarter/Zenfo/Ruined Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
NORTH SHIELDS Witchkraft Wooden Doll 0191 258 1235
NOTTINGHAM Fonda 500/Reverse/Fairy Traders Junktion 7 0115 970 4662
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PETERBOROUGH We Start Fires/Aqua Vista Boy's Head 01733 565021
ROTHERHAM Karnataka/Miv Cameron/Sleeping Giants/Tommy Blinks Herringthorpe Leisure Centre 01709 547343
SPILSBY Carrie Tree/Abigail Moore Spilsby Theatre 01790 752936
WHITEHAVEN Easyworld/Medium 21 Civic Hall 01946 852821
YORK Morgan Four Fibbers 01904 651250

SUNDAY 19

BRADFORD The Business Rio 01274 735549
BRISTOL Mustard Plug/Captain Everything/Howard's Alias Full Moon 0117 924 5170
Taproot/Pulse Ultra Fleece & Firkin 0117 945 0996
CARDIFF Starski/The 22-20's Barfly 029 2066 7658
DERBY Ricky Robinson/Oubliette/Sonic Revolution Victoria Inn 01332 740091
EDINBURGH The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Venue 0131 557 3073
GLASGOW Sophie Ellis-Bextor Clyde Auditorium 0141 248 3000
InMe/Crackout Garage 0141 332 1120
LEEDS Vagabond/Roadhouse New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
LEICESTER The Selecter Charlotte 0116 255 3956
LIVERPOOL Kenfax/Grampus 8/Victor FMA Barfly @ Masque 0151 707 6171
LONDON Catchfire Croydon Cartoon 020 8239 1616
Hercules/Penny Black/Steve Hickey/ Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
Icon Of Coil/Assemblage 23/Swarf Camden Underworld NW1 020 7482 1932
JMC Hackney Ocean 3 E8 020 7314 2800
Silver Sun/Oedipus/Daystar Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
The Spoonful/AM Lovers/Children Of Fortune Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
James Thorn/Resist Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095

PICK OF THE WEEK

AUDIOSLAVE

Formed from the ashes of Rage Against The Machine and Soundgarden, this week sees rock supergroup Audioslave making their first visit to the UK. Though there are traits of their two former groups, Audioslave's sound also pays tribute to early-'70s rock gods such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. Their first single, 'Cochise', taken from their self-titled debut album, is released on January 20. Audioslave play London WC2 Astoria (January 17).

To buy tickets call the *NME* Ticketline on 0870 1 663 663. Check out *www.bringiton.co.uk* to hear and see the best new music of the month.

MANCHESTER **Lucky 7/Appease/Cars As Weapons** Star & Garter 0161 273 6726
Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Kevin Montgomery University 0161 275 2930
NEWPORT **Raging Speedhorn/ Johnny Truant/One Pity** TJ's 01633 216608
READING **Left Side Brain/Sonic Under Mind** Bar Oz 0118 958 7423
SHEFFIELD **Easyworld/Medium 21/ The Licks** Leadmill 0114 221 2828
WINCHESTER **Nizlopi** Railway Inn 01962 867795

MONDAY 20

BELFAST **Sophie Ellis-Bextor** Waterfront 028 9033 4455
BIRMINGHAM **Taproot/Pulse Ultra** Academy 2 0121 262 3000
BRIGHTON **Alaska/County Of Analogue/ Domestica** Pressure Point 01273 702333
Arthur Lee & Love Dome 01273 709709
BRISTOL **The Basement (*NME* Bring It On Night)** Louisiana 0117 926 5978
DERBY **Koufax/Kevin Devine/Emphemetry** Victoria Inn 01332 740091
EXETER **Mustard Plug/Captain Everything/ Howard's Alias** Cavern Club 01392 495370
GLASGOW **Brian Kennedy/Karen Matheson** Royal Concert Hall 0141 353 8000
LEEDS **Lucky 7/Appease/Cars As Weapons** Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Cockpit 0113 244 3446
LEICESTER **One Minute Silence/Fony** Charlotte 0116 255 3956
LONDON **4Ft Fingers** Camden Barfly @ The Monarch NW1 0870 907 0999
Neko Case Camden Dingwalls NW1 020 7267 1577
International Language Of Mime/ Naked Twisted Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
MOT/Blusher Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095
Mustard/The Like Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
Salvo Soho Mezzo W1 020 7314 4000
SoulCyde/Colin K & The Grey/Roama Covent Garden Spot WC2 020 7379 5900
Still Further/The Barbs/Voices Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
NEWCASTLE **Reuben** University 0191 261 2606
NOTTINGHAM **The Flaming Lips** Rock City 0115 941 2544
PLYMOUTH **Raging Speedhorn/ Johnny Truant/One Pity** JFK's, Club 103 01752 768826
STOKE **Sick On The Bus/Foamers/ The Filaments** Talbot 01782 845507
YORK **Stent/Raith/Manydown/Treehouse** Fibbers 01904 651250

TUESDAY 21

BIRMINGHAM **Counting Crows/Gemma Hayes** NEC 0121 780 4133
Jesse Sykes & The Sweet Hereafter/John Hoefflour Ceol Castle 0121 440 4278
BRIDGWATER **Raging Speedhorn/Johnny Truant/One Pity** Palace 01778 434507
CAMBRIDGE **Goldrush/Donderevo** Boat Race 01223 508533
CARDIFF **Martin Grech** Barfly 029 2066 7658
Mustard Plug/Captain Everything Mount Stuart, MS1 Club 029 2030 1000
CREWE **Blind Hatred/Jaded** Limelight 01270 251929
DERBY **Lucky 7/Appease/Cars As Weapons** Victoria Inn 01332 740091
DUBLIN **Sophie Ellis-Bextor** Ambassador Theatre 00 3531 456 9569
GLASGOW **One Minute Silence/Fony** Cathouse 0141 248 6606
Reuben/Mercury Tilt Switch King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Stigma 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
LEEDS **Taproot/Pulse Ultra** Cockpit 0113 244 3446
LEICESTER **Sick On The Bus** Charlotte 0116 255 3956
LONDON **Accelerator/The 22-20's** Camden Dublin Castle NW1 020 7485 1773
The End Of Music/Souldriver/Groove Islington Hope'n'Anchor N1 020 7378 6095
The Flaming Lips Kentish Town Forum NW5 020 7344 0044
Immortal Lee County Killers/Forcis Highbury Corner Buffalo Bar N1 020 7359 6191
Jesse Malin/Jeff Klein Charing Cross Road Borderline WC2 020 7734 2095
Ben Mitchell Camden Fusilier & Firkin NW1 020 7485 7858
Vincents/Blue Sun/Methadrone Kentish Town Bull & Gate NW5 020 7485 5358
MANCHESTER **Dumpstar/Shuriken/The Repomen/Midnight Blue** Star & Garter 0161 273 6726
Echoboy Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
Ten Foot Pole University, Hop And Grape 0161 275 2930
NEWCASTLE **InMe/Biffy Clyro** University Of Northumbria 0191 232 6002
NORTHAMPTON **Easyworld/Longview** Soundhaus 01604 250898
READING **The Selecter/Dawn Parade** University 0118 987 5123
SHEFFIELD **Arthur Lee & Love** Hallam University 0114 225 4143
SOUTHAMPTON **The Thrills/The Basement** Joiners 023 8022 5612
ST ALBANS **Surface 24/Colvex** Horn 01727 853143
WARWICK **Candyheads** University 024 7669 0916
YORK **Dumbstruck** Fibbers 01904 651250

PHOTOGRAPHY: SEBASTIAN ARTZ/ELLIS PARRINDER/ANDY WILLSHER/PHIL WALLIS

NOW BOOKING

For tickets, ring the 24-hour NME ticketline on 0870 1 663 663. Calls are charged at national standard rate

AFI
Sheffield NMB (February 4)

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES
Camber Sands Holiday Centre (April 4-6). Acts include Aphex Twin/Public Enemy/The Fall/Jim O'Rourke/Cannibal Ox

AMEN
Birmingham Academy 2 (January 31), Manchester University (February 1), Leeds Cockpit (2), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (4), Glasgow Cathouse (5), Aberdeen Lemon Tree (6), Sheffield Leadmill (7), Leicester Charlotte (8), Newport TJ's (9), Bristol Fleece & Firkin (10), Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (11), Brighton Concorde 2 (12), Tunbridge Wells Forum (14), London WC1 ULU (15)

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION
London Shepherds Bush Empire (February 21)

BOWLING FOR SOUP
Leicester De Montfort University (February 13), Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall (14), Glasgow Barrowlands (15), Newcastle University (16), Leeds Metropolitan University (17), Liverpool University (18), Cardiff University (19), Norwich UEA (21), Southampton Guildhall (22), Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (23), Cambridge Corn Exchange (24), Nottingham Rock City (25), Bristol Academy (26), London WC2 Astoria (28)

CALEXICO
Dublin Whelans (February 8 & 9), London Shepherds Bush Empire (11), Bristol Academy (April 29), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (30), Manchester University, MDH (May 1), Glasgow University (2)

COLDPLAY
Manchester Evening News Arena (April 14), London Earls Court Exhibition Hall (16 & 17)

THE CORAL
Dublin Ambassador Theatre (February 2), Belfast Limelight (3), Glasgow Barrowlands (5), Aberdeen Music Hall (6), Middlesbrough Town Hall (7), Manchester Academy (8), Portsmouth Pyramids Centre (10), Cardiff University (12), Norwich UEA (14), Oxford Brookes University (15)

DEDBEAT 3
Hemsby Pontin's Holiday Village (February 28-March 2). Acts include Multiplex/Super_Collider/Cassette Boy

THE DELGADOS
Leeds City Varieties (January 29), Manchester University (30), London Shepherds Bush Empire (31), Brighton Pavilion Theatre (February 1), Birmingham Academy 2 (2), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (3), Glasgow QMU (4)

ELECTRIC SIX
Brighton Concorde 2 (January 30), London WC1 ULU (31), Oxford Zodiac (February 1), Cardiff Barfly (2), Manchester University, Hop And Grape (4), Liverpool Barfly @ Masque (5), Edinburgh Venue (7), Glasgow Barfly (8), Nottingham Rock City (9), London Camden Electric Ballroom (12)

SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR
Newcastle City Hall (January 23), Nottingham Royal Concert Hall (24), Sheffield City Hall (25), Liverpool Royal Court (27), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (28), Cambridge Corn Exchange (29), Cardiff International Arena (31), Manchester Apollo (February 1), Plymouth Pavilions (2), Brighton Centre (4), London Hammersmith Apollo (5)

EVE
Glasgow Barrowlands (March 26)

FEEDER
Dublin Ambassador Theatre (February 8), Belfast Limelight (9), Norwich UEA (11), Southampton Guildhall (12), Brighton Dome (13), Ipswich Regent Theatre (15), Oxford Brookes University (16), Cambridge Corn Exchange (18), Nottingham Rock City (19), Manchester Apollo (21), Glasgow Barrowlands (22, March 12), Aberdeen Music Hall (23), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (25), Leeds University (26), Liverpool Royal Court (27), Newport Centre (March 1), Birmingham Academy (2), Bristol Colston Hall (4), Exeter University (5), London Brixton Academy (7 & 8), Dundee Caird Hall (11)

THE FLAMING LIPS
London Kentish Town Forum (January 22)

GONZALES/PEACHES
London Liverpool Street Great Eastern Hotel (February 22)

DAVID HOLMES PRESENTS THE FREE ASSOCIATION
London Shepherds Bush Empire (March 14), Manchester University, Hop And Grape (15), Bristol Anson Rooms (21)

IDLEWILD
Derry Nerve Centre (January 30), Belfast Mandela Hall (31), Dublin Ambassador Theatre (February 1), Whitehaven Civic Hall (3), Aberdeen Music Hall (5), Glasgow Barrowlands (6), Cardiff University (7)

JAY-Z
London Wembley Arena (January 31), Manchester Evening News Arena (February 2)

THE KILLS
London Tufnell Park Boston Arms (February 21)

KINESIS
Bath Moles (February 8), Liverpool Barfly @ Masque (9), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (10), York Fibbers (11), Manchester University, Hop And Grape (12), Bristol Louisiana (14), Oxford Zodiac (15), Cardiff Barfly (16), Leeds Rocket (17), Wolverhampton Little Civic (18), London Camden Underworld (19), Cambridge Boat Race (21), Harlow Square (22), Exeter Cavern Club (24), Southampton Joiners (25), Derby Victoria Inn (26), Tunbridge Wells Forum (28), Bedford Esquires (March 1)

AVRIL LAVIGNE
Birmingham Academy (March 20), Manchester Apollo (21), Glasgow Barrowlands (22), Dublin Olympia (23), London Brixton Academy (25-27)

LEMON JELLY
Dublin Ambassador Theatre (February 22), Cambridge Junction (24), Birmingham Academy (25), Brighton Concorde 2 (26), Manchester University, MDH (28), Glasgow QMU (March 1), Edinburgh Queen's Hall (2), Bristol Academy (4), London Kentish Town Forum (7)

THE LIBERTINES
Sheffield Leadmill (February 22), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (23), Liverpool Stanley Theatre (24), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (25)

MASSIVE ATTACK
Glasgow Academy (April 8 & 9), Manchester Apollo (11 & 12), London Brixton Academy (16-19)

MULL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (January 28), London Shepherds Bush Hall (30), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (March 26), Birmingham Academy 2 (27), Sheffield Leadmill (29), Liverpool Stanley Theatre (30), Bristol Fleece & Firkin (31), Brighton Concorde 2 (April 1), London Shepherds Bush Empire (3), Manchester University (4), Glasgow Barrowlands (5)

NELLY/EVE
London Wembley Arena (March 21 & 22), Cardiff International Arena (27), Sheffield Arena (28), Birmingham NEC (29), Manchester Evening News Arena (30)

NME AWARDS TOUR 2003 WITH THE DATSUNS/ THE POLYPHONIC SPREE/ INTERPOL/THE THRILLS
Dublin Ambassador Theatre featuring The Datsuns/The Beatings/The Thrills (January 24), Glasgow Barrowlands (26), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (27), Birmingham Academy (28), Sheffield University (30), Liverpool University, Mountford Hall (31), Manchester Academy (February 1), Leeds Metropolitan University (3), Nottingham Rock City (4), Norwich UEA (5), Portsmouth Pyramids Centre (7), Cardiff University (8), London WC2 Astoria (9)

NAS
London Kentish Town Forum (February 22)

BETH ORTON
Wolverhampton Civic Hall (March 25), Edinburgh Usher Hall (26), Manchester Academy (27), Brighton Dome (29), Portsmouth Guildhall (30), London South Kensington Royal Albert Hall (31)

RAGING SPEEDHORN
Cambridge Junction (January 22), Hull University (23), Liverpool Stanley Theatre (24), Leeds Cockpit (25), Edinburgh Liquid Rooms (26), Dundee Fat Sam's (27), Aberdeen Lemon Tree (28), Whitehaven Civic Hall (29), Belfast Art College, Conor Hall (30), Dublin Tivoli (February 1), Waterford Forum (2), Swansea Patti Pavilion (3), Sunderland University (4), Coventry Colosseum (5), Leicester Charlotte (6), Oxford Zodiac (7), Tunbridge Wells Forum (8), Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (9), London WC2 Astoria with Ministry (March 2)

THE RAVEONETTES
Wolverhampton Little Civic (February 3), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (4), Newcastle University (5), Leeds University (8), Northampton Soundhaus (9), Norwich Arts Centre (10), Manchester Roadhouse (11), Nottingham Rock City (13), London W1 100 Club (14), Cardiff Barfly (15), Brighton Freebutt (16)

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS/ THE MARS VOLTA
Glasgow SECC (March 5 & 6), London Docklands Arena (8 & 9), Manchester Evening News Arena (11 & 12)

REM
Glastonbury Festival (June 27), Kinross T In The Park Festival (July 12), Manchester Move Festival (13), Dublin Marley Park (16 & 17)

THE ROLLING STONES
London Twickenham Stadium (August 23), London WC2 Astoria (27), London Wembley Arena (29)

THE SIGHTS
Brighton Freebutt (February 10), York Fibbers (16), London Camden Barfly @ The Monarch (24)

SIGUR ROS
Glasgow Barrowlands (February 11), London Hammersmith Apollo (12)

THE SLEEPY JACKSON
London Camden Barfly @ The Monarch (February 10), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (13), Cardiff Barfly (14), Bristol Louisiana (15)

JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION/THE KILLS
Dublin Tivoli (January 29), Nottingham Rock City (30), London South Bank Royal Festival Hall without The Kills (31), Brighton Corn Exchange (February 1)

JOHN SQUIRE
Belfast Limelight (January 24), Dublin Ambassador Theatre (25), Aberdeen Music Hall (27), Glasgow Barrowlands (28), Newcastle University Of Northumbria (30), Leeds University (31), Manchester Ritz (February 2 & 3), Sheffield Leadmill (5), London Shepherds Bush Empire (6)

STONE SOUR
Glasgow Barrowlands (February 19), Newcastle University (20), Birmingham Academy (21), Manchester Academy (22), Nottingham Rock City (24), Bristol Academy (25), London WC2 Astoria (26)

SUGABABES
Manchester Academy (March 26), Liverpool Royal Court (27), Glasgow Academy (28), York Barbican Centre (29), Cambridge Corn Exchange (31), Southampton Guildhall (April 1), Bristol Academy (2), Nottingham Royal Centre (4), London Shepherds Bush Empire (5 & 6)

SUM 41
Manchester Evening News Arena (February 1), Nottingham Arena (2), Glasgow Braehead Arena (3), Dublin Point (4), Cardiff International Arena (6), Plymouth Pavilions (7), London Wembley Arena (8)

SUPERGRASS/ THE RAVEONETTES
Edinburgh Corn Exchange (January 22), York Barbican Centre (23), Manchester Apollo (24), London Wembley Arena with The Datsuns/The Polyphonic Spree (25)

TAPROOT
Glasgow Garage (January 22), Manchester University, Hop And Grape (23), London WC2 Mean Fiddler (25), Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (26)

THE THRILLS
London Aldgate East 93 Feet East (January 22)

TURIN BRAKES
Belfast Limelight (February 19), Dublin Ambassador Theatre (20), Cardiff University (22), Aberdeen Music Hall (24), Glasgow Barrowlands (25), Newcastle University (26), Manchester Academy (28), Liverpool University (March 1), Lancaster Sugarhouse (2), Birmingham Academy (4), Leeds University (5), Sheffield Octagon (6), Leicester De Montfort University (7), Nottingham Rock City (9), Norwich UEA (10), Brighton Dome (11), Cambridge Corn Exchange (12), Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (14), Portsmouth Pyramids Centre (15), Bristol Academy (16), Exeter University, Lemon Grove (17), Oxford Brookes University (19), London Brixton Academy (20)

ZWAN
London Shepherds Bush Empire (February 12)

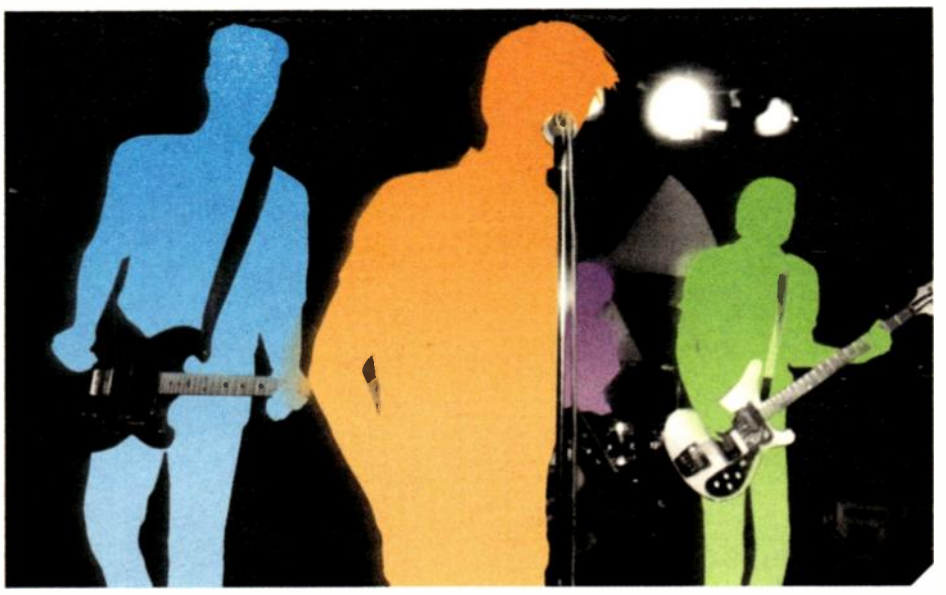
Show stoppers: (clockwise) Idlewild, Starsailor, The Libertines and TCTC

The Cooper Temple Clause, Starsailor, Idlewild and The Libertines are among the acts to join our *NME* Awards Shows celebrations. Tickets have been selling at their fastest-ever rate, showing incredible support for the new rock revolution that has exploded in the UK over the past year. Other acts confirmed to join the party are hip-hop maestro Nas, industrial goth-punkers AFI and garage-rock noiseniks Ikara Colt, The Beatings and The BellRays. The line-up now features Starsailor/Nada Surf/The 22-20's/Hope Of The States (February 4), Nas (5), The Cooper Temple Clause/Ladytron/Ikara Colt/The Raveonettes (6), AFI/Face Of Tomorrow/Kinesis (7), Idlewild/Cave In/The Beatings/My Morning Jacket (8), The Datsuns/The Polyphonic Spree/Interpol/The Thrills (9), Saves The Day/The BellRays/Hell Is For Heroes/The Star Spangles (10), The Coral/The Basement/The Sleepy Jackson/Kings Of Leon (11), The Libertines/Detroit Cobras/The Sights/The Hiss (12) – all at London WC2 Astoria. We also have The Streets/Roll Deep/Killa Kela/More Fire Crew at London Brixton Academy (February 7).

NME TICKETLINE 0870 1 663 663

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Get in a jam with The Works' guide to band rehearsals



It's not glamorous and it's not exciting but it has to be done. Rehearsing. Every band in the world has practised, no matter how shambolic they might seem onstage. Even The Libertines.

First off, you've got to find somewhere to make a racket. Unless you live on a farm or your neighbours are deaf, there's no chance of rehearsing in the house. You've got to be able to play full volume without having to worry about getting a kicking from the big bastard next door.

So you'll need a room to rehearse in. You have two options: either rent a room by the hour from a rehearsal studio, or seek out a space that's yours 24 hours a day.

Proper rehearsal studios tend to be well soundproofed and centrally located. They'll usually have equipment – drumkits, vocal PA, vocal mics – although these can be of varying quality. A good rehearsal room will have friendly staff, all the facilities you need and, most importantly, you'll sound good.

The alternative is to find a place that's yours all the time. While rehearsal studios usually advertise in *Yellow Pages* or, more reliably, your trusty *NME*, permanent practice rooms can be found through any number of ways. The local council might have something, or check out schools and colleges or the back rooms of pubs and clubs for possible openings. Before you commit to a room, check for any possible restrictions to access and practice times and make sure you get something in writing.

Now, what to rehearse? No two bands will answer that question the same. Some will be regimented and fire through a definitive set a few times, while others will jam away for hours in a chaotic mess. Practising shouldn't be a chore, so allow yourself to cut loose a bit. Then again, you want to feel like you're actually achieving something, so no 40-minute drum solos, please.

It'll take you a few tunes to warm up, and sometimes you're not going to be in the mood for it and the band just won't seem to click. Don't get downhearted, these things happen. A band is all about the dynamics between members and rehearsing is all about learning how everyone fits into the band as a unit. One way of gelling is to work on new songs together in the room, and this invariably creates a more natural feel when you come to play live.

How often should you practise? It's entirely up to you, your inclinations and any pressure on members' time, although for most bands once or twice a week isn't unreasonable. Whatever you decide, and as un-rock'n'roll as this advice is, make sure everyone sticks to it.

Rehearsing isn't always a laugh, but then it shouldn't be drudgery either. With the right place and attitude, the hours of practising will make all the difference when it comes to the crunch.

Doug Johnstone

MY WAY

Dolf De Datsun unveils his band's rehearsal strategy

How often do you rehearse?
"We don't. That's not quite true, but even when we're not touring it's sort of a policy of ours not to rehearse that much. We're friends with bands that rehearse all the time and find it gets stale. You see them onstage and it's just like one of their rehearsals. When we're writing new songs it's nice to be in the rehearsal room a bit more, but we tend to write songs on the road anyway."

When you do practise, how structured is it?
"Not at all. If we were to go into a rehearsal room right now, we wouldn't play a single song from our set. We'd just be mucking about with new songs and covers, stuff like that. I just don't see the point of it. Mind you, some of the songs in our set we've been playing for three years, so you'd think we'd know how to play them by now."

Do you have your own rehearsal room back home in New Zealand?
"No, there's a rehearsal space that we hire called the Killing Room in Auckland, but not often. Don't get me wrong, I like to put on a good show but I think it takes a lot more than a tight band to put on a good show."

How important is the atmosphere of the place you rehearse?
"We used to rehearse in an old movie theatre, that was our permanent rental place in Cambridge, New Zealand and it was 20 quid a month. It was completely ours and we could practise there 24/7, so that was cool. We loved that place when we had it, we used to party there and hang out. Of course, we were a lot younger then and we used to practise more back then 'cos we didn't have anything else to do."

Doug Johnstone

HOLLY'S DEMO HELL

Holly Hernandez reviews your demos

INSANIAC
Nerve Centre

"Playing mainly original music..." They mean music that hasn't been registered with the MCPS by anyone else, but it's horrifically apparent that Insaniac have no more grasp on the concept of originality than any of the other playschool punk-pop outfits doing the rounds. They claim to have songs that pack a punch, they claim to sound energetic and awesome and insist we'll remember them even after the hangover has worn off. Of course we will, because, as they say, they sound like The Wildhearts meets Feeder. I, for one, feel spoilt.

INFO: 07946 649059

Insaniac: they've got a nerve claiming to be original

PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMON CLEMENGER

TROG
Demo Ted

Trog's first track, 'Jonathan Living Seagull' is all about Jonathan Living Seagull. He's spreading his wings and sitting on rocks. The genius on vocals is trying to sing like some kind of crazy beat poet. It's quite sad really.

INFO: 07929 042170

KINSLEY
Tell Me Something

In Kinsley's letter, vocalist Jane says she's loathe to pigeonhole their sound but if she had to, she'd admit that people have likened them to Blondie, 10,000 Maniacs and The Sundays. Mediocre guitars, lacklustre melodies and forgettable vocals do not a Blondie make. As for 10,000 Maniacs, Jane is no more the female Eddie Vedder than the girl off *Fame Academy*. And The Sundays? Not in a month thereof.

INFO: 07799 897703

EATON PARK
Heaven's Gate EP

Eaton Park are a four-piece indie pop band from Stoke. Excited? I am, especially when I read that their subject matter consists of rocky relationships, tramps, and fear of loneliness – subjects yet to be fully explored by the Stoke songwriting fraternity. Halfway through track one, however, I've changed my mind and by the time the self-pitying lyrics on track two kick in, I'm more than sated.

INFO: 07736 064276

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10th February
THE LIBERTINES
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AMEN
15th February
VANESSA CARLTON
17th February
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19th February
ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION
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26th February
FEEDER
8th March
LESS THAN JAKE
15th March
SHANE MAGOWAN & THE POPES
17th March
TURIN BRAKES
20th March
MATCHBOX 20
29th March
PUBLIC ENEMY
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BASS PLAYER, 17-21 needed for punk rock band. Management and songs sorted. Pistols, Clash, Johnny Thunders. Style, ideas. London 07947 194274

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BASS PLAYER URGENTLY required! Pavement, Yola Tengo, Sonic Youth. Recent XFM, BBC radio charts, London based. Gigs February www.hybridkid.co.uk Igor 0793 0464110 igorvolk@onetel.net.uk

BASS PLAYER WANTED serious London band. Original songs ready. Inf Hendrix, Who, late 60's. Must have time commitment 07960 852617

BASSIST NEEDED (20-25) for Croydon Indie/rock band, inf: Oasis, Counting Crows, Coldplay. 100% commitment essential. Matt 07930 335175.

BASSIST REQUIRED MELODIC rock/ indie band, jazz trained drummer genuine interest & contacts varied sound. Great tunes. Contact Shimmer 07968 124545, 0208 551 0100 andy@vipr.co.uk

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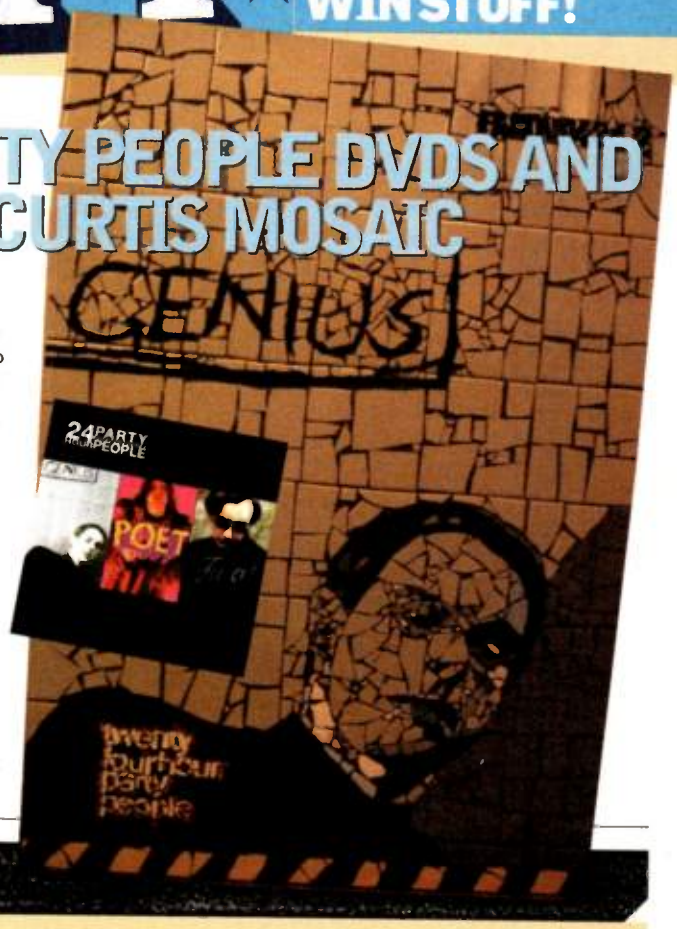
WIN 24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE DVDS AND UNIQUE IAN CURTIS MOSAIC



Released in cinemas last year and out on DVD this month, ***24 Hour Party People*** is a story of pills, thrills and bellyaches, capturing every outrageous Tony Wilson claim, every drug feud and every sloppy Shaun Ryder moment that made Factory Records legendary. Even the film posters were iconic – Madchester-style images labelling Ian Curtis a 'Genius', Shaun Ryder a 'Poet' and Tony Wilson a 'Twat'.

How would you like to win the Ian Curtis one, as an **ULTRA-RARE MOSAIC**, four feet high? Only three of these exist in the whole wide world – one of each poster, by acclaimed mosaic artist Mark Kennedy. They are so rare they've each been given a FAC number by Tony Wilson himself. And thanks to Pathe Distribution, *NME* has the **ONLY** 'Genius' tile mosaic to give away (FACDVD 424.2 to be precise), to one soon-to-be-very smug reader.

Even if you're not the smug one, we've got **TEN RUNNER-UP PRIZES OF DVDS** of the film, plus its banging **SOUNDTRACK**. The special edition DVD, out on January 27, gives you hours of features, music videos and interviews with the people who were there.

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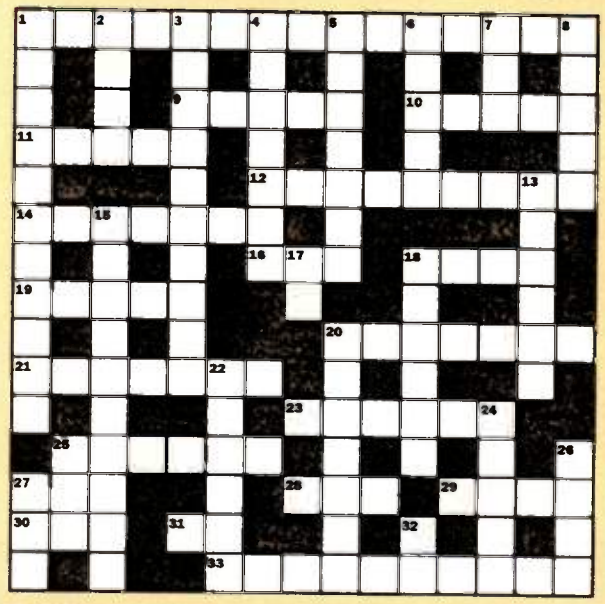

CLUES ACROSS

1+25A The dimmer ones don't work for Interpol, so get switched on (4-2-3-6-6)
9+20A No, this Sum 41 single hasn't turned up yet (5-7)
10 —— Staton, her 'Young Hearts Run Free' was a Number Two hit in 1976 and 1999 (5)
11+5D Some silly tit made changes to her (5-7)
12 But I'd got a new look from Usher (1-3-2-3)
14 I'm in lot turning out a Number One hit in 1993 (2-5)
16 '—— Yourself Whole' was to Kingmaker's own taste (3)
18 (See 32 down)
19 (See 20 down)
20 (See 9 across)
21+33A The day was young when Buddy Holly sang this (5-2-3-7)
23 Bluebells single that is, for me, everything (3-1-2)
24 (See 1 across)
27 Michael Jackson up a Scottish mountain? (3)
28 (See 30 across)
29 (See 8 down)
30+28A Neil Finn album with a musical score (3-3)
31 (See 17 down)
32 (See 21 across)

CLUES DOWN

1+13D Regaining consciousness, he found a new Johnny Cash album last year (3-3-5-6)
2 A bit of Deacon Blue in this crossword (4)
3 (See 18 down)
4 True bit sorted out for an Ozzy Osbourne album (7)
5 (See 11 across)
6 White Zombie guitarist found in barbaric circumstances (5)
7 They banged out a version of 'Word Up' (3)
8+29A An electrifying line in a Squeeze single (5-4)
13 (See 1 down)
15 Band led by Peter Doherty (10)
17+31A The men who were 'Back In Black' (2-2)
18+3D From the beginning it's been exactly the same for both sides, according to Muse (6-2-8)
20+19A Mainman of Bass-O-Matic, has also been remixer for Prince, Madonna and The Cure (7-5)
22 Can't it be remixed for Ned's Atomic Dustbin (6)
24 From the east coast of America comes a Gun Club album (5)
25 They came from Canada to 'Steal My Sunshine' (3)
26 Was this Yello album ruled offside by a linesman? (4)
27 U2 album recorded in their youth (3)
32+18A Act that went to Number One with a 'Flat Beat' (2-4)

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Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and issue date, to the usual address, before Wednesday, January 29. First correct one out of the hat wins!

COMPILED BY TREVOR '8 ACROSS' HUNGERFORD

ANSWERS FROM DECEMBER 21/28 ISSUE

Across: 1+6A Original Pirate Material, 13 Sick, 16 Guru, 17 Caveman, 18 Innuendo, 19 Valensi, 20 Adore, 21 Blake, 22 Kate Korus, 24 Decade, 26 Holy Wood, 27 Nimrod, 29+49A As Good As It Gets, 33+31A Big Star, 34 Ace, 35 In Love, 37+42A Yeah Yeah Yeahs, 39+75D Mott The Hoople, 40 Pearl Jam, 44 Train, 45 Pure, 47 Oasis, 52+28D Curtis Mayfield, 53+70A Smells Like Teen Spirit, 55 Dirge, 58 Morphine, 62+65A The Cedar Room, 66 Freshman, 68 Oh Boy, 69+97D No Angel, 72 Pattern, 74 Beat, 76 Mama, 78+76D Puddle Of Mudd, 82 Over You, 83 Hair, 84 Alive, 86 Don't Go, 88 Blue, 90 Pond, 91+112A Uptown Girl, 93 Let Go, 94 Puss, 96 My Aim Is True, 99 Eels, 102 Inside, 104 Bang, 105 Farm, 106 Harvey, 108 Couse, 109+111D Andrew WK, 113 Goss, 114 Traffic, 115 KRS-One.
Down: 2 Round Round, 3 Gautrey, 4 Nice, 5 Lovely Day, 6 Pumpkin, 7 Ring, 8+9D Think For A Minute, 10 The Sky's Gone Out, 11 Riders On The Storm, 12+57A Love Burns, 13+23D Silver Side Up, 14 Contact, 15 Ride, 25 More, 29 Aim, 30 Safari, 31 Seal, 32 Roam, 36+56A One Step Too Far, 38 Adrienne, 41 Joey Ramone, 43+81D HMS Fable, 45 Peng, 46 Asheton, 48 Shaffer, 50 Tubes, 51+108A Susan's House, 52 Common People, 54 Sir Duke, 59 Ruby Tuesday, 60+89A Hey Sexy Lady, 61 Creed, 63 Coleman, 64+100A Rat Trap, 67 EP Two, 71+98D Sour Times, 73 Neurotica, 77+95A Little By Little, 79 Dalliance, 80 Electric, 85 Interlude, 87 True, 92 Walk On, 94 Push It, 96 Miami, 101 Erma, 103 Echo, 105 Fog, 107 EMF, 109+110D AC/DC.

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GUN DEBATE SPECIAL

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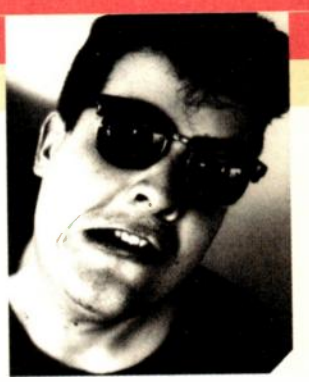

WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION

to understand that gun culture in black music is reflection of society in which fans live
Minister labelled racist after attack on rap 'idiots'
'There is no bought by Swindon's black kid

I'm 19 and having grown up in inner-city Birmingham, around five minutes from where the shootings *(of Charlene Ellis and Latisha Shakespeare)* took place, the current problem is one that concerns me.

Firstly, I think garage and rap music are ethically fine. However, some elements of garage and gangsta rap culture worry me. For instance, when a member of So Solid is arrested for possession of a gun, shouldn't their record company be trying to conceal the incident rather than publicising it? Why does getting arrested when you're a garage MC increase your street cred? Britain's inner cities aren't happy places and class barriers between them and the suburbs are definitely emerging. I have a lot of respect for artists like Roots Manuva, The Streets and Ms Dynamite for highlighting some of the issues but I think that So Solid go about it the wrong way.

Politicians need to speak to kids about what actually happens instead of guessing and making stupid comments. Only then will they have a chance of understanding and maybe rectifying the situation. I wondered whether *NME* could get So Solid to make some sort of statement to their fans about the stupidity, ignorance, racism and violence involved in youth gang culture.

But it's unlikely because it might seem like they're defending themselves and therefore feel they've done something wrong. On the other hand, it could be a brave start to the end of gang culture in schools. Why not use their influence in a positive way?
Viral Sheth, via email

We've had hundreds of letters about Kim Howells's comments on hip-hop, gun violence and the shootings, of which these are just a fraction. This is one of the few that tries to take a constructive view instead of rolling out the old left/right, black/white, nature/nurture arguments. The point is: you don't need to be a So Solid fan to find Howells' attempts to blame pop for deep-seated social problems utterly shallow. There are plenty of morally dubious public figures setting a bad example – why didn't he pick on brawling nuisance Liam Gallagher? Why not wife-beating footballers, arms-dealing politicians, bullying bosses or public-school film directors who glorify Cockney killers?

Some of So Solid's offstage behaviour has been nauseating but you, we and Kim Howells all know that gun-toting gangstas are a symptom, not a cause, of serious social divisions – SD

HOWELLS OF PROTEST

For Kim Howells to blame rap or any other type of music for crime is simply passing the buck. When communities are run by drug gangs, when gun ownership is on the up and when people are so poor crime becomes the only career with prospects, is it any surprise that people get shot? And since people like to listen to music they can relate to, is it any surprise that violent jerks like So Solid Crew become popular?

There are many jerks in rap music who peddle misogyny, gun ownership, hard drugs and street fighting, and it's a shame. But it is not the politicians' business to blame them for the failings of drug policy, gun control and urban regeneration. Poverty, drugs, hate and ignorance cause gun death, not those who sing about it. This fiasco is another damning incitement of a government which cannot admit its failings. Only when we have a truly effective government should politicians waste their time on whatever tracksuit-wearing twat holds our attention this week.
Nick Bannister, via email

It is really disturbing that a British MP could seriously believe gun crime is somehow caused by rap music, and is not a reflection of the failure of successive governments to tackle urban deprivation in this country. He's even made me want to buy a So Solid Crew record, and I actually think they're shit.
James Y, via email

I see we are suddenly plunged back into the post-Columbine debate about the impact of music on the actions of people. According to Kim Howells' logic, young people would appear to be empty receptacles, to be filled with whatever ideas are floating around in the ether and that, consequently, some of these receptacles are filled with hatred and violence via the medium of "rap music", which is portrayed as a homogeneous musical 'bloc' in which all artists act and think in an identical manner. This is despite the more positive messages from the likes of Mos Def and Nas, who are missing from Howells' diatribe. Such receptacle-filling is then assumed to lead directly to gun crime. This from a government about to launch an unprovoked violent attack on another country in the name of 'liberty'.

I say this attack on 'hip-hop' is a load of rubbish, cynically and deliberately calculated to deflect attention from any other potential causes of gun crime in this country, particularly the way in which certain inner-city areas have been allowed to decay to the point where covert activity (ie drugs) has become all too familiar as a means of exercising economic power.
John Gibson, Newcastle

21 SECONDS TO REPLY

Personally I think it is courageous and admirable that a politician has the guts to say something so blunt and direct about the gun problem. I am a fan of rap and garage music, but I think it is pathetically obvious that the macho lyrics promote gun culture, and encourage an outlaw attitude. The UK scene is a baby-brother wannabe scene trying to ape the USA; guns, slang, criminal posturing, random shooting at gigs. I think your Editor's response *(NME.COM, January 6)* is just a knee-jerk reaction to 'the man' and authority; law-abiding isn't cool, hip-hop stars are. I don't wanna live in a nation full of idiots like ODB.
Sandy McLean, Glasgow

There's nothing wrong with music being made by anyone of any race – but there is something wrong with guns, and our music really shouldn't be promoting them. Impending war is worrying enough as it is, without worrying about guns in our own streets and clubs.
Mikey Boy, Leicester

SO MANY HATERS

So Solid claim they are "trying to make a positive difference in British black culture" and are annoyed with the minister for culture referring to them as "boasting macho idiots". Is this the same So Solid Crew who among their ranks have broken the jaw of a 15-year-old girl, pointed a gun at a traffic warden and recently been in court on the charge of dealing cocaine while in possession of a loaded handgun?

A positive difference? Bollocks.
Michael, Nottingham

Kim Howells' comments may be naïve, but surely any sane person's conclusion is simple. Black music, be it rap, garage or otherwise, is not inherently evil or corrupting, any more than The Beatles' haircuts were back in the day. But anyone stupid enough to be caught carrying a gun around in their pocket deserves whatever they get. Some spokesperson from So Solid Crew claiming that they present a "positive image" is so hilarious it could be satire. Anyone from the garage scene could stand up and make a positive statement about violence, but hey, that might damage their street credentials, right? This isn't a black and white issue, it's a question of conscience.
Gin Soaked Boy, via email

Please let your Editor know I disagree strongly with his view regarding Kim Howells' comments about rappers and firearms *(NME.COM, January 6)*. So Solid Crew's history is more about guns, drugs and violence than it is about music. It would be far more positive if headlines were being made by So Solid Crew members campaigning against firearms rather than being arrested for their possession.
H Hall, London

I've just spent an afternoon combing the lyrics to So Solid's album – which I'm willing to bet Kim Howells has never done – and you too, H. I found two references to guns, four to flash German cars and about 11 to *Casualty*. If garage fans are as impressionable as you claim, perhaps the government should plant upbeat anti-gun messages in hospital dramas – SD

RACISM AND POVERTY: NME TO BLAME

Lyrics don't kill people, but gangster culture certainly does. There are many reasons why (mainly black) kids get involved in gangster culture: lack of opportunities, unemployment, lack of positive role models and so on. It is not 'racist' to state that rap/garage music promotes gangster culture as a cool way to riches and sexy women. *NME* and its white suburban readers are living vicariously off the dangers and thrills of the gangster lifestyle. Black kids pay the price in bullets, prison terms and hellish neighbourhoods.
Ben Dessau, London

Fair point, but no-one here is "living vicariously". *NME* reports on artists, even when they reflect ugly reality or even when they themselves are flawed or unpleasant human beings. The point remains the same: *music does not cause these hellish conditions*. Racism, poverty and violence existed long before rap and garage and when Kim Howells has a minute, *NME* would love to hear how he plans to tackle those – SD

PICTURE THIS

YOUSIF, LONDON
"This is me with Sym and Guy from The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster at the Forum. I can't believe how short I am."

LELLIE, WALES
"Me strutting my stuff onstage at the Easyworld Christmas gig. Well worth travelling to London from Wales for!"

GENINE MOODY, ABERDEEN
"Me with Tim Burgess after an amazing gig. He was a genuinely nice, friendly guy."

VANESSA SMALEC, LINCOLN
"My second meeting with Jarvis, at Rotherham. The first time, the photos never came out!"

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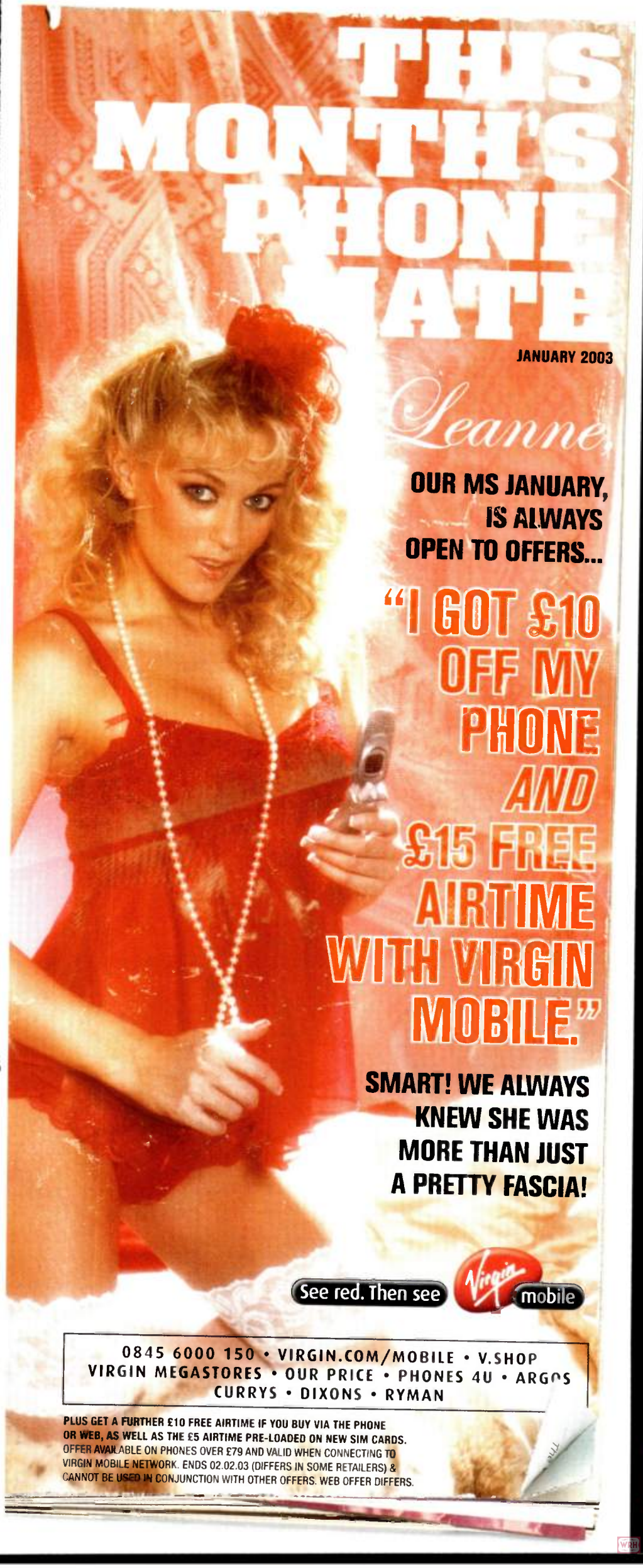
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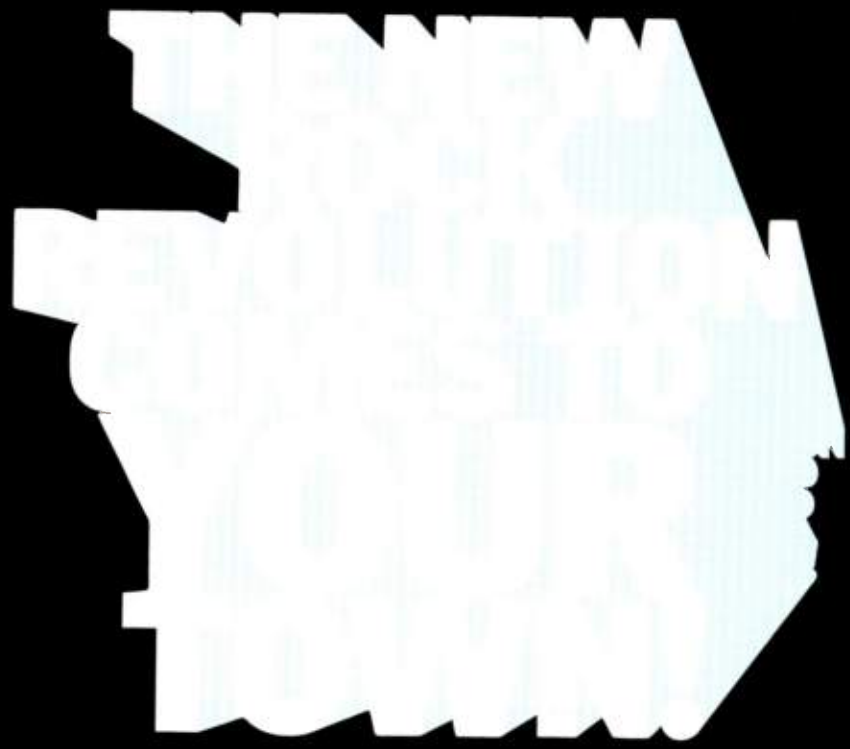

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